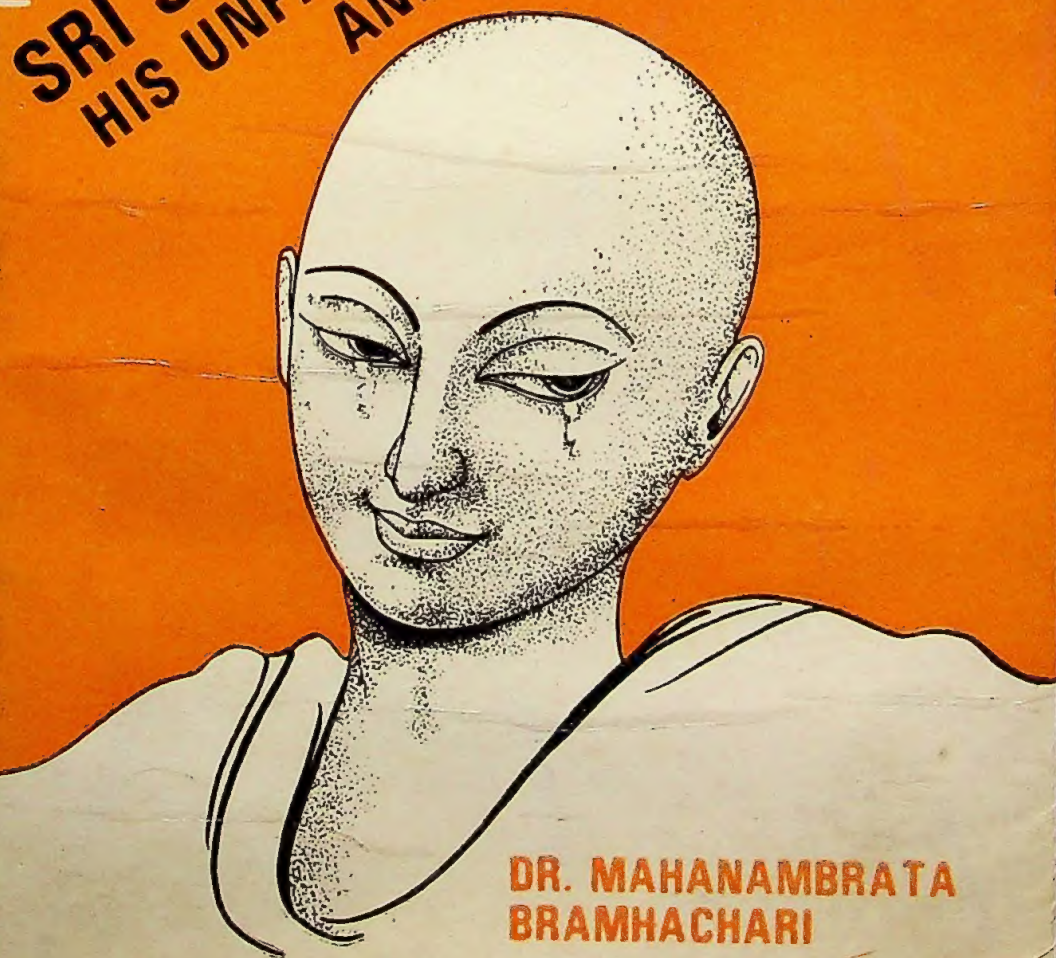


MAHAPRABHU
SRI SRI KRISHNA-CHAITANYA
HIS UNPARALLELED PERSONALITY
AND PHILOSOPHY



**DR. MAHANAMBATA
BRAMHACHARI**

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Dr. Mahanambрата Bramhachari

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FOREWORD

Sri Chaitanyadeva, the forerunner of the Indian Renaissance has not only evoked wide response from his contemporaries who became, in astoundingly large numbers, his disciples, transforming their life-pattern and attaining transcendental heights through spiritual awakening, but also intellectuals of later times who have come out with their own assessment of one of the world's greatest personalities, known to history. Their assessment is, as to be expected, varied. Historians have attempted to discern his role in the context of the age in which he lived, not forgetting, of course, his tremendous impact on the subsequent ages. Social Scientists have come forward with their assessment of Chaitanyadeva's work as a social thinker and reformer. The exponents of Philosophy and of Comparative Religion too have not lagged behind in presenting to the posterity their views on the Great Master's life, teachings and work. Scholars who have investigated into the origin and development of Bengali language and literature have also attested to the enormous debt that Bengal's language and literature owe to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Lastly, critics and art-historians are no less enthusiastic in tracing the nature and extent of the influence of Sri Chaitanya on the aesthetics of the contemporary and succeeding ages.

Such assessments are indeed valuable. They go a long way in making us comprehend the great life which many people in this country and elsewhere have invested with the qualities of divinity and indeed look upon him as an incarnation of Divinity itself. A mere intellectual approach, however excellent as an academic exercise, is not necessarily the last word on the theme it chooses to dilate upon. Similarly, a purely emo-

tionally impregnated study, however honest and well-intentioned may be, as often happens, relate the views emanating there from to an area and a period so long they remain surcharged with emotional effusions. A response evoked by reactions of a predominantly emotional nature is often found to be ephemeral. Too much reliance on intellectual findings, in the long run, prove to be as elusive as those primarily derived from emotional exuberances.

But the supreme fact remains that in dealing with Sri Srichaitanya we deal with a Supreme Being, a personality who was more the maker of his age than its product, an individual who shone as a great exponent of the highest philosophy as ever conceived by man, but at the same time a teacher who could mould the mind and action of that undefinable element known as the crowd or the mass. He was a rare combination of the Realist and the Practical in one, a mastermind whose magic was matched by the equally potential virtue of logic, and a noble teacher, endowed alike with love and rationality, who could transform a whole nation by his appeal to their intellect and emotion alike.

Who then can hope to unravel the mysteries of Sri Sri Chaitanya's life and teachings? It seems that a person who has at his command the twin qualities of intellect and Realisation derived from spirituality can hope to comprehend the Grant Eminence such as Chaitanyadev was. The book entitled *Mahaprabhu Sri Sri Krishna Chaitanya—His Unparalleled Personality And Philosophy*—is a testimony as much to the extraordinary power of intellect as to the depth and intensity of spiritual realisation as represented by its author. Dr. Mahanambata Brahmachari is not a more intellectual or a philosopher in the accepted sense of the term; he is much more than that. Dr. Brahmachari has been throughout his life a seeker of Truth, and the exponent of a way of life, deriving its strength from a sense of intense religious devotion,

and even exercises. In other words, the Brahmachari is now a student turned teacher, a seeker turned discoverer, and one of the few of whom it can justly be said that his life itself is his message. Endowed by nature as well as by training as the author is, he has acquired deep love for humanity, to which are added deep knowledge of the scriptures and philosophy, and above all, the supreme quality of Realisation, the presentation of the life and teachings of Sri SriChaitanya by him does justice to the noble theme such as can reasonably be expected of a Scholar—Extraordinary of the stature of Dr. Mahanambrata Brahmachari.

16 May 1986
Calcutta

Sd/- Nisith Ranjan Roy

CONTENTS

	<i>Pages</i>
The crisis of our Modern Age	1
Mahaprabhu's Message-The only Solution	4
Sri Srikrishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu—	
His Personality and Philosophy	6
Mahaprabhu's Ancestry	8
The Historical Back Ground	9
The Holy Descent	10
A Buoyant Boy	11
The Sacred Thread Ceremony (Upanayan)	14
Father's Demise	15
Nemai Pundit	16
Sojourn To East Bengal (Now Known As Bangladesh)	17
Mahaprabhu's Second Wedding—	
A Splendid Celebration	19
Pilgrimage To Gaya	21
The August Appearance of Iswar Puri	22
An Unique Indication	23
Reception Back Home	24
Ecstatic Signs	25
The Unprecedented Kirtan Processions	26
The Advent of Nityananda	27
The Regeneration of Jagai And Madhai	28
The Seven-Prahar Trance	29
Mukunda Stood Weeping	36
Adwaita Summoned	37
Murari Gupta Comes	37
Haridasa Enters	38
Pundit Gangadas Comes	39
Arati Time And Sachidevi's Vision	40

Arati Ceremony	41
End of Seven Prahar Trance And Its Aftermath	41
Conversion of Chand Kazi	43
Mahaprabhu's Sannyas	44
(World—Renouncement)	
Bereavement At Nabadwip	46
On Way To Brindaban, But Back to Shantipur !	48
On The Way To Nilachal Puridham	52
How Far is my Lord Jagannath ?	5
Pundit Sarbabhouma	59
Meanwhile Search Continues For Prabhu	61
Gopinath Acharya And Basudeb Sarbabhouma	63
Bhattacharya And The Acharya	64
Mahapundit And Mahaprabhu	67
The Last Word of The Vedas	69
New Life For Sarbabhouma	71
Liberation Lila in South India	72
Emancipation of Basudeb At Kurmasthan	75
Meeting With Ray Ramananda	76
Buddhists Taking The Name of Krishna	79
Bhagabad Gita And Studying Brahmin	80
Lord Narayana And Lord Krishna	82
With His Gaudiya Devotees	87
Moving Jagannath	95
Appearance of River Ganges in a Well	96
Seeing Lord Jagannath	97
Travel To Braja And Returning From Midway	98
At Bachaspati House in Gaudadesh	100
Fleeing To Kulia	101
Gourhari At Adwaita's House	106
Sachi Devi Cooks For Nemaï—Power of Shak	108
Eight Slokas Composed By Murari	109
Miraculous Cure of A Leper	110
Tithi Aradhana of Madhabendra Puri	111
At Kumarhatta In Shribas Temple	112

Bhagabat Acharya At Baranagore	115
Travel To Brajadham Through Forests	116
Kashidham-Prayagdham Madhupuri	119
Re-discovery of Shri Radhakunda	122
Showering Grace On Rupa Goswami At Prayag	123
Gourhari At Kashidnam Again	125
Eternal Questions (Sanatan Prashna)	127
Deliverance of Sannyasis	130
Criticism of Shankara-Bhasya	133
Brajabas of Subuddhi Roy	136
Back To Nilachal	138
Arrival of the Gaudiya Devotees	139
The Dog That Was Blessed	141
Rupa Composed Appropriate Sloka	142
Gour Tattwa As Indicated In Slokas of Sri Rupa Goswami	144
Pradyumna Mishra	145
A Drama Written By A Bengali Brahmin	147
Kripa To Raghunath Das	149
Gobardhan Shila And Garland	153
Passing Away of Shri Haridas	155
Maha-Utsab For Shri Haridas	161
About Shri Haridas Thakur	164
Hurt Feelings of Jagadananda	167
Kripa To Kalidas	170
Kripa To Raghunath Bhatta	173
Kripa to Raja Pratap Rudra	174
Taking Meals at Adwaita's Place	176
Sitanath—You Lose	177
Appeal To Netai Chand	178
Father Pundarik	179
Punishment of Premnidhi	181
Song of Devdasi	182
An Aboriginal Woman	183
Mood of Divine Insanity	184
Assuming A Larg Form In Divine Insanity Mood	186

Pumpkin Shape During Devine Insanity	188
Picked In The Fisherman's Net During Divine Insanity	190
OH ! Krishna Where Are you ?	193
Appreciation of Gouranga Mahaprabhu's Teachings	194
Riddle Sent By Adwaita	201
Aprakat Lila of Shri Shri Gour Sundar	203
The Philosophy of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu	207
The Achintya Bhed-Abhed Philosophy of Mahaprabhu	209
The Difference Between Jnan and Bhakti	210
Rasa-Tattva	214
Summum Bonun of Life	217
Brahma And Krishna	220
Prem-Tattwa	224
Prem—The Fifth End (Panchama Purushartha)	232
Sikshastaka—The Eight Teachings of Sri Chaitanya	235

MAHAPRABHU SRI SRI KRISHNA CHAITANYA HIS UNPARALLED PERSONALITY AND PHILOSOPHY

THE CRISIS OF OUR MODERN AGE

The modern age we are living in may be termed as an age of science. The peculiar characteristics of this age is that unusual development of scientific findings in almost all aspects of life has taken place. Tremendous changes have been brought about throughout the world at large, particularly in the fields of transportation and communication, all of which are epoch-making and unprecedented.

Only a few centuries back man could walk on his own feet only and was able to cover a distance of barely 6 Kms. in an hour. To-day, however, thanks to jet engines and rockets travelling 6000 Kilometres an hour is child's play. An orator possessing tremendous vocal power formerly could perhaps make only 4000 people hear his speech. To-day using microphones and public address systems and wireless communicating systems the same orator could make millions of people hear his discourses simultaneously at different parts of the world. Telephone, telegraph, radio and now the television are all the magic wands of modern science. The marvellous discoveries have now made the world into a small and accessible place. To-day mankind can come closer to each other physically than before. These remarkable advancements of science have obliterated the distance of place and time and every person in our world to-day has been brought practically to one neighbourhood.

Yet strangely enough the opposite is also equally true. While the physical distances have now shrunk, the distance between man and man has become greater than ever before and this is due to the impact of this modern civilisation. In the econo-political field, man's accomplishments to-day are remarkable, but the social-fellowship, cordial mutuality and desirable virtues which are so essential for a satisfying life are woefully decaying fast daily. In the same building to-day we hardly know the occupier of our neighbouring flat. Sympathetic considerations for our fellowmen, which is the inherent necessity of human life, it appears is going to disappear from our world !! A man without any fellow-feeling is simply a machine, and very rapidly modern man is becoming just that. Our mutual behaviour is becoming utterly mechanistic.

Man's econo-political togetherness requires to be supplemented by a human-sharing of affection and sympathetic behaviour which is sadly wanting in our present society. Every person to-day feels isolated and helpless yet around him he finds so many people. Man's individualism has risen to the highest peak, whereas his societal obligations has fallen to the lowest abyss.

All of these have posed a dreadful menace to the modern civilisation. The entire civilisation is now unbalanced, unharmonious—and thus an unprecedented crisis has been created. Development must be uniform, but to-day our politico-economic nearness with the socio-spiritual remoteness have brought about a painful disparity which is going to bring about the destruction of human culture and this is the cultural crisis of our modern times. The situation may be considered from an individual standpoint. If one cares to talk to any individual sympathetically, it would be found that he is on the verge of being torn to pieces because of dissonance. The reason is simple. Harmony in a man's life

depends on the exact balancing of his total personality, which comprises of two substantives, body and spirit. The body possesses organs for action, whereas the soul possesses consciousness and the free will for the control. Modern science has improved the power of our physical organs of senses and action, namely, our ears have been enlarged by the radio, our eyes have been enlarged by television, telescope and microscopes, our feet by the airplane and so on. But the soul and spirit which possess the consciousness and feeling, is being crippled due to lack of proper sustenance. The food for the soul is the divine love and fellow-feeling which unfortunately so called science cannot provide. Nor does it of course claim to do so. Our physical necessities are being provided for as readily and quickly as the demands for these are raised or created, whereas our spiritual needs are being utterly overlooked and often ignored. Science is providing food—physical food in abundance, but not a morsel for our spiritual sustenance. Science has not yet discovered machines to produce spiritual food for us. Hence the result is that our physical bodies are becoming bulkier and our Astral bodies are becoming sicklier. Wherever you look you can find food in abundance for our body but nothing for our soul.

To use modern terminology, our bodies are becoming respectable Bourgeois and our souls are turning into abominable Proletariats. This Disharmony is eating into the vitals of our mundane existence. Lop sided development created by the materialistic science lies at the root of almost all of our problems. The Human race is going to be doomed in the course of time, unless these crises is significantly and immediately solved. Human civilisation is confronted to day with a calamity of a ruinous nature and this needs an immediate solution of a basic nature.

MAHAPRABHU'S MESSAGE—THE ONLY SOLUTION

If we look around within this present millennium, i.e. the span of the past ten centuries, to find out a person most competent to bring about a harmonious and basic solution of the burning problem of our present world, we cannot but point our finger towards only one singular personality, who is known all over the world as "Shri Krishna-Chaitanya Mahaprabhu."

Precisely five hundred years (500 years) ago Mahaprabhu came down to us from his celestial abode and brought about a heavenly unification of mankind, irrespective of caste, creed and race, irrespective of the richly-luxuriant or the poverty-stricken and irrespective of the "have" and the "have-nots." He was God but in the disguise of a lover of God. He loved God profoundly and recognised keenly and truly the sparks of God in each and every created being. He ushered in a spiritual regeneration under the banner of "Para"-love and tranquility. He was the hero of Nabadwip and enlightened the world by the exquisite beauty of his person. He attracted large crowds wherever he went by the all-soothing appeal of his unique-gospel of transcendental love. Only two arms he had, yet there were all embracing and with their charming embrace he drew all people towards him under one roof of Universal Brotherhood. His teachings and preachings can be said to consist of only one phrase "LOVE GOD AND LOVE MAN". To illustrate the power of his philosophy of love, we would like to sketch an outline of the time of his descent on this earth. Mahaprabhu appeared in Nabadwip in the province of Bengal during the Islamic regime in India. Hussain Shah was then the ruler of Bengal, and his capital was in the town of Ramkeli (in present Malda).

Nadia (Nabadwip) was the citadel of learned persons and intellectuals, it was like Oxford or Cambridge. Political turmoils of wild commotions were not rare. Demolition of Hindu temples was almost of daily occurrence. The imperial richness of the citizens were proverbial. Economic poverty was negligible, but mental poverty in the form of meanness and narrowness of heart was rampant. Free thinking and new thoughts in the field of philosophy and literature were practically non-existent. Learned persons known as "Pundits" were engaged in writing commentaries and sub-commentaries on the most dry type of logic known as "Navya Nyaya." These pundits were experts in detecting fallacies in other's arguments, but their own method of living and personal behaviour with fellow-persons were itself full of fallacies and contradictions. They knew how to deliver argumentative discourses on the one-ness or secondless-ness of "Brahman", but in their personal living they hesitated to touch even the shadows of the so called "Untouchables", who had been ousted from the pale of the then Hindu Society. High and strong barricades of orthodox "Varnashram Dharma" segregated the Hindu Society into hundreds of water-tight compartments.

The broad banks of the Holy Ganga river of Nabadwip were full of eminent scholars and their pupils numbered several thousands. They devoted their entire time and life-energies in discussing the dry fabrications of the "New-Logic". Commentaries and sub-commentaries were being piled up on one side and on the other a barricade of Himalayan proportion was being built to separate the higher classes from the lower classes. When the pundits were brooding over hair-splitting differences in the definitions of invariable concomitants (Vyapti) thousands of Hindus were getting converted to the Muslim faith to join the "castless society" of the Islamic Brotherhood as preached by them.

The people were groaning under the pressure of Brahminical

autocracy and the tyrannical oppression of their land-lords. They were demanding social justice and human-fellowship, but were denied this. Adwaita Acharya a great lover of human beings felt the pangs of the general people, and finding no other remedy, prayed wistfully to the Almighty for His kind descent on this mundane plane as the Saviour of the oppressed ones. His prayer was answered and the Lord did come down in the benign personlity of Shri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

The entire nation was longing for such a graceful person. who was an ocean of purest love and had profoundest sympathy for all human beings. The universality of the teachings and magnanimity of Shri Krishna Chaityana's loving heart combined to bring about a an-outpouring of bliss which the people breathed in the peaceful atmosphere of divine calmness. This is what Mahaprabhu did and this is exactly what to-day we are so badly in need of.



SRI SRI KRISHNA CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU— HIS PERSONALITY AND PHILOSOPHY

Shri Chaityana Mahaprabhu—The Supreme Reality incarnate in human form, descended from the highest heavens on the soil of Bengal, in India in the last quarter of the fifteenth century (1485 A.D.) of the Christian Era. In the Biblical language the Lord of the universe "was made flesh and

dwelt amongst us." Before the advent of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu "DIVINE LOVE" was a word merely to be found in lexicons but now this became tangible and sensible as a pre-eminent living being for once in our human history, in the personality of Shri Krishna Chaityana Mahaprabhu. Chaityana Mahaprabhu had a benign personality and he was exquisitely handsome and charmingly delightful in his dealings with all. Any man or woman who happened to come across Him was thus attracted to him. What to speak of human beings, even the beasts of wilderness wistfully looked at Him whenever He crossed their path.

His blissful body shed a lustre like that of a rising Sun, but was soothing like that of a Lunar orb. The soothing luminosity of his crimson colour might be compared to molten gold.^a All opposite qualities inhered in Him cogently and coordinately, so that no one could fathom their depth or measure their breadth. He was meek and mild like a little child, yet he was as stern as a thunderbolt. The profundity of His knowledge and simplicity of behaviour at the same time were astonishing. His kindliness was fathomless. It embraced each and everyone without any distinctions of caste, colour, race or rank in life whatsoever. He could not tolerate an iota of injustice, but his compassion for sinners was exemplary.

At heart He harboured genuine affection for all people, yet He renounced every one dear to Him for the realisation of spiritual ends. In Him the pure Divinity descended on this sullied soil of our mundane plane, but His transcendence from all the impurities was unparalleled. He was one of us, but He was super-natural and not one of us at all. In His peerless personality encompassed an all embracing piety for all the created beings and a supra-devotional love for the Godhead.

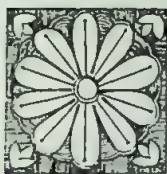
MAHAPRABHU'S ANCESTRY

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was the son of Jagannath Misra and the grandson of Upendra Misra. His fore-fathers originally hailed from Jaipur in Utkal Pradesh (Orissa). Their surname "Misra" indicates also that they hailed from Orissa. Adwaita Acharya's father Kuver Pundit was the best friend of Upendra Misra. Kuver Pundit was an inhabitant of Srihatta now known as (Sylhet) which was one of the most cultured districts of East Bengal (now Bangladesh). Kuver Pundit requested Upendra Misra to come and settle in Srihatta and he agreed to do so and settled in "Dacca Dakshin", a small town in the Sylhet district where the ancestral house of Chaityana Mahaprabhu still stands. According to some scholars, however, Jita Misra the great—grandfather of Upendra Misra had settled in Srihatta and lived on the bank of the 'Buro-Ganga'.

Jagannath was the seventh son of Upendra Misra. Jagannath's mother was Kalabati, and as she was exquisitely beautiful, everybody called her 'Shovaboti' (*i.e.* a paragon of beauty). Jagannath Misra married Sachi Devi, daughter of Pundit Nilambar Chakravarty who was also a resident of Srihatta. Sachi Devi gave birth to eight daughters, all of whom died at an early age. Her ninth issue was a son, and was named Viswarupa. When Viswarupa was ten years old Chaitanya Mahaprabhu sanctified the womb of Sachi Devi. Shova Devi the grandmother of Mahaprabhu had a vision that the Supreme Lord would be coming down to the earth as the son of "Sachi Devi" and that He would be born on the bank of the river Ganges. Sova Devi entreated her son Jagannath and Sachi Devi therefore to start for Nabadadwip and expressed her desire that this son when born should be shown to her. Sachi

Devi promised to do so. Jagannath and Sachi Devi came to Nabadwip and resided there.

It is an well-known fact that during Mahaprabhu's sojourn to East Bengal He went to Sylhet to meet his grand-mother Shova Devi to keep the promise of Sachi Devi. He had also presented his grand-mother an image of 'Radha-Krishna' and this idol is still preserved there for us to see.



THE HISTORICAL BACK-GROUND

Jagannath Misra was a great scholar. The title of "Purandar" was conferred on him by all the pundits and he was often called 'Misra Purandar',

When Mahaprabhu descended on this mundane plane of ours it was the evening of a total lunar eclipse, Saturday, the 27th day of Falgun 1407 (27th day of February 1486 A.D.). For a mere 48 years Mahaprabhu stayed on this earth and disappeared from us in 1534 A.D. during a Sankirtan utsav in the temple of Tota Gopinath in Puri.

During His life time Pathan kings of the 'Lodi' dynasty namely Bahllal, Sikander, Ibrahim and the Mughal Kings like Babar and Humayun sat on the throne of Delhi and ruled India.

Sultans ruling Bengal at that time were Barbak, Feroz Shah, Nasiruddin Mahammad Shah, Muzaffar Shah, Hussain Shah and Giasuddin Muhammad Shah.

During Mahaprabhu's life-time itself 'Vasco-da-Gama', the famous Portugese explorer and navigator, arrived at the western coasts of India navigating from Europe around the "Cape of Good Hope" and set up a direct commercial link as well as cultural link between Christian Europe and India.

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THE HOLY DESCENT

When eclipses occur it is the usual custom of the Hindus that during that time they chant the name of 'HARI'. As the day Mahaprabhu was born happened to be a total Lunar-eclipse, everyone in Nabadwip flocked to the banks of the holy river Ganges for taking holy dips in the sacred river and to chant the name of 'HARI'. As he was born under the Neem tree he was called NEMAI.

The sweet sounds of 'Hari Kirtan' rent the skies of Nadia. It echoed and reverberated all around. When the skies of Nadia was full of Hari Kirtan sound Mahaprabhu was born and thus indicated that the purpose of Mahaprabhu's descent on this earth was to preach 'HARINAM' to the world.

He has been called "the father of Sankirtan." In the "naming ceremony" Nemai was given the name of "Bishwambhar", which when translated literally means—"one who maintains the people of this world and brings them up." (Dharana and Poshana). At the "Annaprasana" ceremony,

in accordance with the age old custom Jagannath Misra held in his hands a tray which contained gold coins, paddy, clay, a pen and a pot of ink and Sacred books. He placed this tray before Mahaprabhu and without any hesitation the child laid his hands on "Bhagabatam" the most sacred scripture describing the delightful life of Lord Shri Krishna. This incident indicated to all present that this child would not only become a great scholar but also would one day be a great preacher of the Lilas of Lord Shri Krishna.



A BUOYANT BOY

When Bishwambhar was only three or four years old he turned into a very obstinate boy. He wanted things which were normally inaccessible such as stars in the sky, the shining moon, the birds flying across the sky and so forth. Naturally these could not be brought to him and he would then fall down on the ground and cry incessantly. No one could stop His crying. It was then discovered that the only remedy to pacify him and stop his crying was just to chant the holy name of HARI. Mahaprabhu not only stopped crying, but He also started uttering the name of HARI Himself along with the others.

His tone while crying was so sweet and charming that every one liked to hear him cry and then utter the name of 'HARI' to pacify Him. This indicated that his mission was to make all chant the sacred Hare Krishna mantra.

When Nemai reached the age of five, the initiation to learning ceremony ('Hathe Khari') in accordance to the age-old custom took place. He learned the Bengali Alphabets consisting of fifty (50) letters in just a day and astounded everybody. The Sanskrit alphabets and that of Bengali are the same but the Bengali alphabets are written in a different script. In Sanskrit, every alphabet is called 'Brahma'—'Aksharam Brahma Paramam'. Mahaprabhu being Himself Brahma Incarnate could therefore master the entire alphabets instantaneously.

Sudarshan Pundit, the family priest, became Nemai's first teacher. The people of Nabadwip were surprised to witness the talents in the boy, Within a few days, he not only completed his studies in the Pathashala (Primary School) but also entered the "Tol" (Sanskrit High school) of Gangadas Pundit. While studying in the "TOL" Mahaprabhu's mischievous behaviour was rampant amongst His neighbours. He would enter their houses, destroy their foods, drink away their stored milk from the milk-pot directly. He would even pinch their sleeping children and then run away as soon as they started crying. Nevertheless this naughty conduct of the boy charmed them all. There was none who did not love him. His smiles enthralled them and everyone wanted to protect him and to touch him with affection and love.

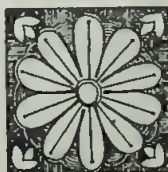
Mahaprabhu feared none, not even his parents. The only person of whom he was afraid of was his elder brother Vishwarup. Sachi Devi would ask Vishwarup to stay at home so that his younger brother Nemai might remain docile and quiet because of his presence but Vishwarup would not listen to her. Vishwarup liked to hear the discourses on 'Bhakti' (devotion) from Adwaita Acharya. Vishwarup told Sachi Devi that she had yet to recognise the real supra-personality of Vishwambhar but one day she would be able to.

All the boys of the same age were Nemai's bosom friends.

In a group they used to take holy bath twice or thrice daily in the river Ganges. It was a charming spectacle to witness the swimming feats of those boys. While swimming, water sprinkled by their feet would fall on the persons thus sullyng them who had already finished their bath. The chastising sharp looks of these bathers cast on Mahaprabhu did not bother him at all.

Vishwarup, Nemai's elder brother became a sannyasin at the tender age of sixteen. He was handsome and his Scholarship was profound. His love and devotion to God was also unparalleled. Vishwarup's parents were planning to get him married, but when he learned about this he renounced the world and became an "ascetic." The heart rending cries of his parents were unbearable. Mahaprabhu was deeply moved by the extreme grief of his parents and at one point he even fell into a swoon. Of course soon afterwards He became calm and sober, and from that day his childish pranks ceased. Thereafter he became a diligent student at the "tol" of Gangadas Pundit. and devoted his time learning his lessons attentively. He became studious, and even held discourses with his friends on various subjects. He also looked after his parents dutifully.

Nemai was called "GOUR" (গৌর) because of his golden complexion. He was called "Hari" also because he attracted everybody and then stole their hearts.



THE SACRED THREAD CEREMONY (UPANAYAN)

When Nemai reached the age of nine his parents decided according to the age-old traditions of the Brahmin caste, to put the "Sacred thread" on him. This is a very sacred ceremony for the Brahmins. On this occasion, the sacred "GAYATRI-MANTRA" was uttered into Nemai's ear by his father himself. At once Nemai fell into a swoon. His eyes turned reddish and all his hairs stood erect on its ends. He looked radiant, as if the glaring rays of the mid-day sun were emanating out of his body. Everyone became afraid because this was the first time in their life they had seen such an extraordinary event during a Sacred Thread Ceremony. It transpired as if some external power had gotten hold of Him. Observing this the Brahmin pundits came to the conclusion that it was Lord Krishna Himself who had entered Nemai's body. Everybody thought that Nemai was the Lord Himself in the guise of a man. After a while, however, Nemai completely became normal. He then observed the vow of silence, and the austerities of "Brahmacharya" in accordance with the Upanayan Ceremony. His two teachers—Sudarsan Pundit and Gangadas Pundit then performed all the ceremonies required in a Sacred-thread ceremony.

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FATHER'S DEMISE

When Nemai was only ten years old, he lost his loving father. He cried like a child—the loss was unbearable to Him. His widowed mother Sachi Devi became almost helpless. The people of Nabadwip were full of sympathy for them and rendered them all help. Sachi Devi harboured only one thought since then, how would she bring up her son, how would her son grow up true to the high traditions of the family? Mahaprabhu always consoled her, and said her that she need not worry for anything. There was nothing in the world, which He would not bring for her. At this Sachi Devi felt elated. Gangadas Pundit was entrusted with all the responsibilities of His education. Mahaprabhu was absorbed in his studies day and night. During those days no one saw him without a book in his hand. Many students and scholars of Nabadwip studied in the “TOL” of Gangadas Pundit. The Pundits of Nabadwip realised that they had never come across such a boy like Nemai who was so studious and dutiful. The senior students and Gangadas Pundit himself were astonished to see the depth of knowledge and the manner in which Nemai held scholarly discourses.



NEMAI PUNDIT

At the age of sixteen, the name and fame of Nemai's scholarship spread all over the country. He obtained permission from the 'Pundits' to run a "TOL" himself now. He started his 'TOL' and many students took admission in it. The pundits of Nabadwip became afraid of him, because whenever any of them would come his way, Nemai would ask them questions on the critical points of the "Sastra", and this unnerved them. They could not answer his piercing and probing questions and would acknowledge Nemai's profound knowledge in the 'Sastras'. The fame of her son made Sachi Devi very happy. Her mental and worldly poverties disappeared and her joy knew no bounds. She then started contemplating the marriage of her son. Mahaprabhu married Lakshmipriya, the daughter of Ballava-Acharya, who himself was a great devotee of Lord Sri Krishna. The exquisitely beautiful Lakshmipriya was a perfect match in every respect for the charming Mahaprabhu. This beautiful and perfectly matched couple attracted everybody. The intense love amongst Lakshmipriya, Mahaprabhu, and Sachi Devi created an ideal happy home. The presence of Lakshmipriya in the house of Mahaprabhu and the happiness and joy emanating from there pervaded all the houses of Nabadwip.



SOJOURN TO EAST BENGAL
(*Now known as Bangladesh*)

The reputation of Mahaprabhu, as a great scholar was already wide-spread when he made up his mind for a sojourn to East Bengal. He had learnt from Sachi Devi and relatives that their ancestral home was in Srihatta (now known as Sylhet). He fondly desired to visit his ancestral home and thereby fulfil the promise his mother Sachi Devi had made to her "mother-in-law" Shovadevi that her grand son when born would be sent to see his own grand-mother. The Scholars of East Bengal already knew Nemai Pundit as a great scholar because of a commentary on the "Kalapa Vyakarana" written by Mahaprabhu had already been read and discussed by the pundits in the 'TOLS' of East Bengal. Nemai got overwhelming cordial reception from the people of East Bengal. The people of Srihatta welcomed him most, since they took him as one of their own, Srihatta being the birthplace of both Jagannath Misra—Purandar and Sachi Devi. Incidentally, Adwaitacharya, Shribash Pundit and Murari Gupta, who by then were residents of Nabadwip, all of them had hailed originally from Shrihatta. The enchanting beauty of Nemai's person, and his profound scholarship attracted people from all quarters. The people considered it a rare fortune to touch his lotus feet, and being able to do so their gratefulness knew no bounds. The scholars held scholarly discussions with him and the students listened avidly to his sweeping reflections and sermons. The people in general received his benign blessings. His all-embracing love knew no distinctions of caste or creed or race.

One day Tapan Misra came to Mahaprabhu and questioned

him for clarification about the "Summum-Bonum" of human life. Mahaprabhu gave Tapan Misra a few pertinent instructions about "HARINAM SANKIRTANA". Mahaprabhu told Tapan Misra to proceed to Varanasi immediately where he would meet Mahaprabhu again and there they both would then get the time to discuss this profoundest subject fully. Needless to say this prophecy of Mahaprabhu materialised within a short time. It indicated that Mahaprabhu had already decided then about becoming a Sanasyin !!

Mahaprabhu, who looked up on the river Ganges with deep reverence, found great pleasure in taking bath in the Padma river in East Bengal and considered the Padma river identical with the river Ganges. Mahaprabhu entrusted the river Padma with "Prem" and said to Padma, "You take this love of Krishna and offer it to Narottam when he comes and keep it a secret. You will be able to recognise Narottam by his touch, which will make your waters swell up."

It may be mentioned here in this connection that many years after this Narottamdas Thakur was born. When Narottam was only fourteen years old, he saw Nityananda Prabhu in a dream ordering him to receive from the river Padma, the "Prem" which had been entrusted to her by Gouranga Mahaprabhu. The next morning when Narottam went to the river Padma and touched her waters—it swelled up. The river Padma then recollected atonce the words of Mahaprabhu and entrusted 'Prem' to Narottam. Narottam then became an entirely changed person after receiving 'Prem' from river Padma.

Having earned great fame as well as wealth bestowed upon him by the people of East Bengal Mahaprabhu returned to Nabadwip. But some very sad news was awaiting for him. During the sojourn to East Bengal of Mahaprabhu—Lakshmi-devi could not endure such a long separation from Him. Apparently a snake bit her from which she died but in fact it

was the intense pain of separation which really took away her life !



MAHAPRABHU'S SECOND WEDDING— A SPLENDID CELEBRATION

The demise of Lakshmidēvi shocked Mahāprabhu rudely. To keep away his grief he plunged himself now deeply into studies and held frequent scholarly discourses with his own students and other scholars. He also studied "Nyaya-Philosophy" and wrote a very scholarly commentary on it. One day, while Mahāprabhu was crossing the Ganges in a boat with Rāghunāth Sīromoni, who was also a brilliant scholar of "Nyaya", he read out his commentary to Rāghunāth. Rāghunāth turned pale. Mahāprabhu observed this reaction keenly and on asking the reasons thereof came to know from Rāghunāth that a commentary on the same subject has also been written by him but this would not be accepted by anybody if this most perfect and flawless commentary of Mahāprabhu's remained in this world. Hearing this Mahāprabhu smiled and threw away his own manuscript into the Ganges river. Rāghunāth was astonished by this self-sacrifice of Mahāprabhu exemplifying the fellow-feeling and magnanimity for his friend.

Sachidēvi deeply felt the demise of her daughter-in-law, Lakshmi-priya. She desired keenly that her son should marry for the second time. She was afraid that unless the mind of Maha-

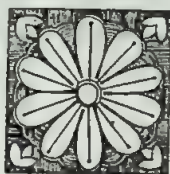
prabhu was diverted into wordly affairs he too might follow the footsteps of his elder brother Viswarupa and like him renounce the world any day.

Lakshimpriya's death had turned the blissful atmosphere of Sachidevi's home into wilderness. Sachidevi was on the look out for a suitable bride for her son. One day, while taking a bath in the Ganges, she saw Vishnupriya, daughter of Pundit Sanatan Misra. Vishnupriya was exquisitely beautiful and most charming. Sachidevi liked Vishnupriya at the very first sight. She engaged Kashinath Misra then to carry out negotiations for the marriage of her son with Sanatan Misra's daughter. Vishnupriya's father Sanatan Misra and mother Mahamaya were overwhelmed with joy hearing this news from Kashinath. They could not dream even that their daughter Vishnupriya could be chosen for Nemai Pundit whose fame had risen sky-high by then in entire Nabadwip.

In due course the marriage between Nemai and Vishnupriya was celebrated with great pomp and grandeur. Buddhimanta Khan, a Zamindar of Bengal (present day West Bengal) bore all the marriage expenses on his own.

One noteworthy incident however, took place during this marriage ceremony. While Mahaprabhu was entering with Vishnupriya the 'Basar-Ghar' (the room where the married couple pass the first night of their marriage), she stumbled against the lower jamb of the wooden door and injured her foot which started bleeding profusely. Vishnupriya was ill at ease at this incidence but Mahaprabhu surreptitiously pressed the wound with his right foot and the bleeding stopped immediately. Vishnupriya's intense pain also vanished at Mahaprabhu's touch. Vishnupriya considered her injury to be a bad omen, but Mahaprabhu's caresses and consoling words soon made her forget all about it. She realised that if she ever had to face any calamity those would be removed immediately by her kind and sympathetic husband.

Sachidevi felt as if Lakshmipriya herself had returned from her heavenly abode, because the physical and even the mental makeup of both Lakshmipriya and Vishnupriya were almost identical. Mahaprabhu played the role of an ideal family man, and this made Sachidevi the happiest person on the earth. The conjugal love of the couple was so unfathomably deep and boundless that the people of Nabadwip during those days, and even later on the devotees all over the world, worshipped and adored them as the ideal divine couple of "HARA-GOURI."



PILGRIMAGE TO GAYA

At Gayadham tradition-bound Hindus offer oblations (Pindas) at the sacred foot-prints of Lord Vishnu on the head of "Gaya Asura" so that their deceased forefather's departed souls could be liberated forever. Mahaprabhu, who was an ardent believer of age-old traditions, desired to travel to Gaya and offer oblations for the peace of the souls of his deceased father and forefathers.

Sachidevi did not like this idea of her son going to Gaya at all, as she had always experienced that whenever Nemaï stayed out of the house, extreme chaos and calamities prevailed. Though most unwilling she finally relented and permitted him to go to Gaya. With great reluctance Sachidevi and Vishnupriya had to give their consent as they realised it was incumbent on

a son to offer those oblations. They wiped away their silent tears.

Sachidevi had peresuaded her sister's husband Chandrasekhar Acharya to accompany Mahaprabhu on his pilgrimage to Gaya as his escort. The journey to Gaya, a distance of approximately six hundred kilometres (400 miles) was made on foot. When Mahaprabhu arrived at "Mandār" a holy place near Bhagalpur (in the State of Bihar), he took his bath in a river called "Kira" and immediately caught high fever. His companions naturally became very afraid as they had never seen him sick before. Mahaprabhu prescribed his own medicine however. He said that if he could drink the water sanctified by the feet of any good Brahmin he would be cured of his illness. This prescription was then carried out and Mahaprabhu immediately recovered from the high fever !!



THE AUGUST APPEARANCE
OF
ISWAR PURI

When Mahaprabhu arrived at the Vishnu Pad-Padma temple in Gaya, he first prostrated himself before it. He then entered the temple and touched the sacred foot-prints of Lord Vishnu ("Vishnu Pada-Padma"). He turned mad with joy and started to dance in ecstasy. Tears rolled down his cheeks like torrential rain. He began chanting aloud "HARE-KRISHNA"—"HARE-KRISHNA."

As if by accident (or should we say, providentially) "Iswar Puri" was present there on that occasion and saw Mahaprabhu in that ecstatic condition. Mahaprabhu then said to Iswar Puri—"Oh Sir, save me from the abyss of wordly concern. Help me to have the vision of Lord Krishna" and prayed to him to be initiated ("Diksha") at his hands. As soon as Iswar Puri embraced Mahaprabhu—tears from both their eyes started rolling out in torrents and drenched both their holy bodies. After sometime Mahaprabhu regained his senses and offered oblations (Pindas) to his deceased father and forefathers. He also performed all the religious rites associated with such oblations.

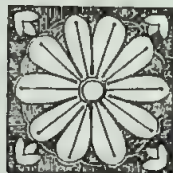
Next day Mahaprabhu himself cooked food and fed Iswar Puri. Then he besmeared the holy body of Iswar Puri with sandal-paste, and prayed again for Initiation (Diksha) and cried like an innocent child.

मन्त्रं कुरु मन्त्रं कुरु। मन्त्रं कुरु मन्त्रं कुरु॥
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AN UNIQUE INDICATION

Iswar Puri realised that Mahaprabhu was none other than Lord Shri Krishna Himself. He, however, did as he was asked and uttered the holy mantra in Mahaprabhu's ear—a mantra which consisted of ten (10) sacred letters. As soon as Mahaprabhu received the holy mantra he became a completely transformed person. Tears rolled down his cheeks and he

began to cry—"Where is my loving Krishna ? Where should I go to find him ? Chandrasekhar thought that to be a kind of insanity and hurriedly brought back Mahaprabhu to Nabadwip.



RECEPTION BACK HOME

The news of Mahaprabhu's return home from Gayadham spread throughout Nadia. The people of Nabadwip celebrated the arrival of Mahaprabhu by blowing conch-shells and decorating their houses with flowers. A delightful atmosphere reigned everywhere. The students and other people of Nabadwip rushed to his house to have a vision of his beautiful face. Mahaprabhu said, 'It is with your blessings that I have been able to come back home safely.' These polite words of Mahaprabhu astonished everybody. The elders placed their hands on his head and blessed him. He told everybody then to come next day to the house of Shuklambar Brahmachari, where he would relate them his experiences in Gaya.

ECSTATIC SIGNS

Next day everybody went to the house of Shuklambar Brahmachari and there Mahaprabhu wept and said that in Gaya he had found Lord Krishna and then had lost him also. He then entreated everybody to help him in finding back Lord Krishna. Just like an orphan child He began to cry—"Where is Krishna ? Where has He gone ? Where can I get Him ?" While crying like this he fell into a swoon. He began to throw his hands and feet like an insane person. His devotees like Shribash and Gadadhar realised that these actions of Mahaprabhu were symptoms of deep love for Lord Krishna. Sachidevi and Vishnupriya, however, failed to appreciate all these transformations. They turned pale and were shocked at seeing these changes in Mahaprabhu.

The students came to him for their daily lessons, but Mahaprabhu began to explain them about the evanescent beauty and compassion of Lord Krishna. He explained every "Sutra" in the light of the behaviour and grace of the Lord Krishna. The students went to Gangadas Pundit and complained to him. Gangadas came to Mahaprabhu and rebuked him saying that he must pay full attention to the studies of his students. Mahaprabhu consented readily, but he failed to keep his words. It was just impossible for him to do so as he was unable to speak of anything other than the greatness and sweetness of Krishna. Every word he uttered expressed his unbearable pain due to his separation from Krishna. Everyday his devotees used to assemble in the house of Shribash and perform "HARI KIRTAN." Mahaprabhu used to raise his hands above his head and dance charmingly. Tears of ecstasy streamed down his cheeks and sprinkled

everyone gathered there singing "HARINAM." Everybody sang "HARINAM" in a chorus at the top of their voices accompanied with loud but melodius beatings of "Khol's" (small drums) and "Karatals" (hand-cymbals).



THE UNPRECEDENTED KIRTAN PROCESSIONS

Sometimes he would go out of Sribash's house in a procession singing Harinam Kirtan. Thousands of people would join the kirtan procession as it moved along—all chanting the name of "HARI" loudly. Mahaprabhu was very tall. Each and every one wistfully looked at his beautiful and radiant face and completely forgot about themselves.

Mahaprabhu's instructions to the people were : "Utter the name of Lord Krishna—love Him—worship Him—surrender yourselves to His will. The best way of Krishna-realisation is in "SANKIRTAN". Sing the name of Lord Hari loudly in a chorus with the accompaniment of "Khol's" and "Karatals" (drums and cymbals)."

Everybody followed his advice. People used to go in long processions with Sankirtan through the streets of Nabadwip. All the people of Nabadwip were charmed by the divine scenes of "Sankirtan" processions never witnessed before by any one before this.

THE ADVENT OF NITYANANDA ..

Almost everyday Mahaprabhu used to say, "A great personality is coming and his advent will enhance the joys of Kirtan a thousand fold." Indeed within a few days such a person did arrive. His name was Nityananda. People say, he was an incarnation of Balarama, the elder brother of Krishna. Nityananda's love and affection for Mahaprabhu was unparalleled. The meeting of Mahaprabhu and Nityananda took place in the house of Nandan Acharya and created an unique and most delightful scene.

When Nityananda (Nitai) joined the Sankirtan procession, the people's joy knew no bounds. Everyone felt as if the sounds of Krishna's name were dispelling all the darkness of ignorance, absolving them of inner sins, the selfishness and meanness from their hearts.

It appeared as if "Vrindaban", the eternal abode of Sri Krishna, had descended to Nadia and the 'Rasa Lila' has been transformed into the "Sankirtan" festival. It seemed as if the "Gopis" of Vrindaban dancing around "Radha-Krishna" had now appeared on the streets of Nadia in the form of Bhaktas (devotees) dancing and singing "Harinam" around Mahaprabhu and Nityananda.



THE REGENERATION OF JAGAI AND MADHAI

"Sankirtan" brought about a new kind of joy and enthusiasm in the country. There were persons, however, who did not like it. Many Brahmin pundits were dead against this method of worshipping the Lord. They claimed this way of rousing God by shouting aloud without any considerations of the "Shastras" (scriptures) would enrage Him and bring down His wrath upon mankind. The method is "Un-scriptural" (Ashastriya) and is thus a useless method of worshipping the divine Lord." Loud Sankirtans also disturbed the night's slumber of people. Two Brahmin youngmen Jagannath and his brother Madhab (popularly known as Jagai and Madhai) were the "Kotwals" (Superintendent of Police) of Nadia. These two brothers were of Brahmin stock but were always under the influence of alcohol and always partook in nefarious activities. They got enraged and were determined to stop this boisterous HARINAM Sankirtan of Mahaprabhu and Nityanand and their retinues.

One day Nitai and his companions were passing through the streets of Nabadwip. Nitai asked Jagannath and Madhab to utter the name of "HARI". Both of them became terribly enraged. Madhav took hold of a broken piece of an earthen pot lying nearby and threw it vehemently aiming at Nitai. It struck Nitai's forehead and injured him seriously. Blood spurted out of his forehead. This news reached Mahaprabhu and he rushed from his house to the scene where Nitai and his followers had been accosted by Jagai and Madhai.

Meanwhile, Nitai, pressing his wound with one hand, embraced "Madhai" with the other and said—"Hurt me again if

you so wish, but I will make you chant the name of "HARI" and absolve you of all your sins."

Mahaprabhu having reached the scene embraced "Jagai" and said—"Utter the name of 'HARI' and I myself will take all of your sins.

The divine touches of Nitai and Mahaprabhu brought forth immediate and complete transformations in the two brothers. Their spiritual regeneration took place. They then prostrated themselves before the feet of Nitai and Mahaprabhu. They raised their hands above their heads, danced and sang aloud the name of "HARI" along with the whole retinue. Since then Jagai and Madhai became saintly persons.

This spectacle was wonderful and very impressive. The efficacy of "Sankirtan" to bring forth changes amongst the worst of the sinners and turn them into saintly persons became patently clear to all.



THE SEVEN-PRAHAR TRANCE

(a) *The feeling of Separation and its Outburst :*

During this time Mahaprabhu used to undergo three types of trance. In one he felt he was bereft of Lord Krishna and was afflicted by His separation. In an other state he would be overwhelmed with ecstasy as if he had met Krishna. And in the third state he would identify with Lord Krishna Himself.

When he was not in any of these three stages of trance (which was of course very rare) he was just a common normal man. A very simple, normal human being, slightly different from others in that he had in him a great abundance of compassion.

In his normal state he was as simple as a child, as tender as a mother, as humble and devotee as a servant and had complete respect and reverence for elders and others. His face gleamed with a smile and his glances were most charming. But very seldom did he remain in this normal state of mind. He was always in any one of the above mentioned three stages of trance.

Mostly he was afflicted with the pangs of separation from Krishna. He was most miserable then and it appeared as if he would have a complete breakdown because of the extreme agony of mind suffered in that stage. His depth of sorrow and outcries of mortal afflictions made his devotees feel that at any moment he would give up his life and his heart would shatter into thousands of pieces if at that very instant the Lord Krishna did not favour him by appearing before him. Such agonies of separation from the Lord would make him unconscious frequently. His teeth would clench together so hard that it was almost impossible to open up his mouth. He would appear to be lifeless having stopped breathing and with no heart beat

At these times he would utter, "There is my Lord. There He is. He is everything in my life." Sometimes he would just fall and faint. At times he appeared to have got his Lord Krishna by his side. On those occasions his ecstasy just cannot be expressed in words. In extreme delightfulness and excitement he would start dancing like a mad man. His lotus eyes would shed tears incessantly. Tears would roll down his cheeks to his chest like torrents of rain. The earth would be drenched with showers of his tears. When he danced in his

highest ecstasy it seemed the whole universe was dancing along with him in greatest delight. Then he would cry out—"There, there is the Lord of my life—he has come !" and uttering this would then fall unconscious.

At other times he would be seized with peculiar stages of trance. On some occasions the state of trance would last for a very long period or sometimes it would last for a very short period only. One day Mahaprabhu was just talking in his normal state with Murari Gupta, a great devotee. Suddenly Mahaprabhu's attitude underwent a sea of change. He became terribly angry. It seemed as if rays of thousands of suns burst forth from his body. He shouted—"The wretched Prakashananda teaches Vedanta at Varnasi, but he does not recognise my spiritual body. He shreds my body to pieces. I would teach him a good lesson,"

Prakashananda was a renowned ascetic in Benaras. He did not acknowledge the spiritual body of the Supreme Lord as he strongly believed and taught "monism" in Vedanta. Prakashananda as a "Monist" believed that the Supreme-Lord is formless, hence He cannot possess a body. But the Bhakti cult of Mahaprabhu believed absolutely in the spiritual body of the Supreme Lord. Without the spiritual form of the Supreme Lord it is not possible to stick to the cult of Bhakti. Krishna is the supreme personality of Godhead and this body is full of knowledge. He is eternal and Blissful.

Having thus rebuked Prakashananda severely Mahaprabhu suddenly returned to his former "normal state"—as if nothing had happened.

Sometimes he would enquire 'Have I done any thing incoherent ? In fact he could never recollect what he did or what he said while he was in those stages of trance. Just a faint indistinct memory of that remained. He could just understand that he had been in a trance and had talked incoherently in that state. He would therefore inquire of his devotees

if he had spoken anything improper or was totally incoherent. The devotees, however, never disclosed him what he had said or done in his trances.

At times he would become and behave like the Supreme Lord. Once he remained in a swoon for a very long time. Suddenly he woke up and sat on the "Vishnu-khatta" of Lord Vishnu in such a natural way as if that 'Vishnu seat' was his own. In his normal state he would always bow his head to that "Vishnu seat" but now in his trance he sat on that very "Vishnu seat" with a flourish and started talking to all assembled.

(b) *A Continuing Trance for Seven Praharas :*

On one occasion in Sribash Angan he remained seated on that "Vishnu-seat" for seven long praharas i.e. twenty one hours, and spoke to numerous men and women in his most natural way.

On that occasion an unseen, uncommon lustre emitted from his body and illuminated the inside of the house. The lustre was as pleasing as that of the million moons shining and again at the same time it was as radiant as that of ten million suns. His devotee "Gadadhar" then anointed his divine body with sandal paste and flowers. Gadadhar graciously adorned the golden complexioned body of Mahaprabhu with flower decorations and garlands.

Nityananda set up an umbrella over Mahaprabhu's head. Narahari started fanning Him with a "Chamara" (চামরা). His face beamed with lustre, without a sign of anger or terror. From that smiling face showers of love, compassion and peace dripped like honey. On whomsoever He once cast His eyes full of sweetness, that person felt as if he was united with the heart of Lord, being bathed in sweet joy or that the Lord Himself was entering his heart and being merged with him. Everyone thought that he was swimming in the ocean of joy in the very presence of the Lord. Somebody would worship Him

mentally with love as flowers, some others would collect flowers from the gardens and adorning him with them would worship him with sandal, kumkum, aguru, expensive garments and beautiful costly jewelleries. The Lord shone before all as the form of concentrated Love. People could now visualise what Divine Love really was. From every quarter devotees flocked to him. Each one dedicated themselves, offered prayers and worshipped him according to his own fashion. Everyone realised how amiable, how graceful, how affectionate, how sweet, beautiful and unequaled Lord Gouranga was in this mundane world. These were not mere wishful thinking on their part. These were deep and actual realisations of their hearts. That day everyone was gratified with the purest form of tenderness for the Lord. They showered Him from all sides with flowers. Everyone in that huge assembly felt that none was present in that room except the Lord and himself !! Though many people seemed to be talking, each felt that absolute silence was reigning in the room and only he alone was communicating with the Lord sitting before him. The exchange of words and mental interactions were taking place as if only that particular individual was with the Lord. Everybody felt that all of them were united with the Lord in a body and that there was no separate existence between them and the Lord, other than that which was only for rendering pleasurable services to Him.

This godly trance of Mahaprabhu continuing for twenty one hours (seven praharas) at a stretch was the most strange event that occurred. Not only did the lustre of thousands of moons and suns emitted from Mahaprabhu's body but every devotee and every inanimate object in that room on that day and occasion also emanated a divine effulgence.

After this seven prahar trance had come to an end and though the Lord had left the room yet a divine glow remained in that room for a fortnight. Such an event has never taken place on our earth before this.

Several devotees brought many varieties of exotic fruits from the market. Many prepared various pithas (cakes) and other sweet dishes themselves and brought these from their house. The Lord in his boundless grace accepted every item that was offered to Him. He ate all the food offered Him by some two thousand people gathered there on that occasion. Everyone had their "Darshan" of this divinely glamorous mood to their heart's content

A sweet fragrance emanated from the Lord's body and his divine beauty filled every one present with ecstatic joy and love. Words escaping out of the Lord's lips appeared to be sweet drops of honey and enchanted everyone. It appeared as if kindness, sweetness and love, rather Love in torrents were oozing out of His body. Seeing this, peace and tranquility reigned in everyone's hearts and minds.

Mahaprabhu now beckoned Shribash and told him — "Once you had gone to Pundit Devananda to listen to the discourses on 'Srimad-Bhagabatam'. There you felt an ecstasy and got lost in it, which neither the pundit himself nor the assembled audience could appreciate or understand. They threw you out of that sabha (auditorium). The blows that fell upon your body all landed on Myself."

This incident had never been communicated to anyone by 'Sribash'. This had occurred actually even before Mahaprabhu was born. Shribash realised that the Lord was omniscient and had an inner vision before him. Mahaprabhu then asked some one to fetch Shridhar. Shridhar was a very poor man who earned his meagre livelihood by selling the leaves and skins of banana trees (Kala-pata and Thore). Mahaprabhu, when known as Nemai Pundit, used to snatch away these banana leaves and skins from Shridhar and paid him very nominally. Shridhar used to chant loudly the name of Lord throughout every night. The person who went to fetch Shridhar could easily identify Shridhar because of this chanting of the

Lord's name. Shridhar hearing that Mahaprabhu has sent for him came eagerly. Shridhar came and stood before Mahaprabhu. He then told Shridhar "Every day at the Nabadwip Bazar (Market place) I would quarrel and haggle with you for the banana leaves and skins. I would continue taking my food from the banana leaves provided by you and eat the banana tree skins you would give. Now come before me and look up at me." Scarcely had Shridhar opened his eyes when he saw before him the four handed Lord Narayana (Chaturbhuja Narayana) and holding Shankha (conch shell), Chakra (disc), Gada (club) and Padma (lotus) in His four hands. Shridhar was practically illiterate, but he recited then a hymn never heard before in praise of the Lord. Mahaprabhu now gave him a boon—"Shridhar, thou art poor so I offer thee the Kingdom of the Three worlds. (Swarga, Marta and Patal)," Shridhar, however refused to accept this boon. Mahaprabhu enquired of him—what exactly then do you ask for ? Shridhar replied—"May he who snatched banana leaves from my hands be my darling for all my future births."

This prayer of Shridhar roused a profound ovation from all the devotees present.



MUKUNDA STOOD WEeping

Although Mukunda was very dear to Mahaprabhu and was sitting just outside the house, Mahaprabhu did not call him to come inside. Mukunda sat there weeping. Shribash pleaded on behalf of Mukunda to the Lord to allow him to enter. But Mahaprabhu said—"Mukunda explains "Bhakti" (devotion) and mixes knowledge with it. He shall attain Me only after a thousand years." Hearing this Mukunda started dancing in joy. "Only a mere thousand years is required me to achieve the Lord. How fortunate I am.' Immediately Mahaprabhu sent for Mukunda and told him that his waiting for a thousand years had just elapsed. Mukunda was overwhelmed with delight and fell at the Lord's feet. The Lord said :

"I was testing you and you passed the test creditably."



ADWAITA SUMMONED

Then Mahaprabhu called for Adwaita and shouted "Nyada ! Oh ! Nyada !" As Adwaita approached he was asked to pray for a boon. Adwaita replied, "I crave for nothing more. What I had hoped for I have received. I wanted you to descend to this earth—to deliver all of us and this has now been accomplished hence nothing more remains for me to ask for."

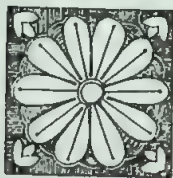


MURARI GUPTA COMES

Mahaprabhu then beckoned Murari Gupta to have a look at His Divine Form. Murari was a great devotee of Lord Shri Ramachandra. As Murari looked at Mahaprabhu, he saw his Lord Ramachandra Himself seating on that Asana (throne) flanked on His left by "Janaki" (daughter of King Janaka) and on His right by Lakshmana. Before Him stood "Hanuman" and other "Banars". Murari having glimpsed his own cherished Lord standing before his own eyes —fainted. "Prabhu" then called Murari and said "Murari does not thou recognise yourself ? Thou wast the subservient "Hanumana" during My incarnation as Rama I was very gratified with the services

you rendered me. Now take your boon Murari." Murari submitted in reply :

"Oh Lord, they are there your servants,
May I be there to dwell with them.
Put me there as your servant, my Lord,
Assure me it will never be otherwise."



HARIDASA ENTERS

Now Prabhu called upon Haridasa and said "Haridasa when the infidels were caning you at the 'Baish-Bazar' (the 22nd Market Place) and all the while you went on chanting. My name, those cane strokes falling on your back actually struck Me as I protected your back with my own. Now look at those caning marks on My back". Haridasa hearing this started crying aloud. Mahaprabhu continued saying : "Though I descended from the Baikuntha My celestial abode to protect you with 'Sudarsan Chakra' (Disc) in My hand I could do no harm to your oppressors as you were praying for their well beings all along. Hearing this Haridas-fell down and rolled on the dusty earth, crying :

"Prabhu ! Oh my Prabhu ! Oh Thou merciful !"

PUNDIT GANGADAS COMES

Prabhu then called Gangadas Pundit and said 'Once thou with thy family hadst arrived very early in the morning on the bank of the Ganges. Finding no ferry boat to take you across thou wast crying 'Oh Lord Govinda do save us as otherwise we would all fall prey to the hands of wicked people when the day breaks'. As you beckoned Me in utter distress I came down from my seat at Baikuntha and appeared before you as a ferryman with a ferry boat and took you all over to the other bank of the Ganges. Then I returned to Baikuntha'.

Hearing this Gangadas was overwhelmed with joy. What was just said by Prabhu to him were all facts. Gangadas did not tell this incident to anyone nor at the time when that event occurred Gangadas did realise it. But now he could understand that it was all a Lila (sport) of the Lord—just a sport of the all merciful Lord in His unbounded graciousness. Gangadas went on rolling in the dusty earth in deep gratitude and extreme delight.



ARATI TIME AND SACHIDEVI'S VISION

It was soon "Arati" time. Shribas said to Adwaita. "Let us now fetch "Sachi Ma" (Mother Sachidevi) for the Arati ceremony. All this time she has been complaining that we have spoiled her child. Now she shall perceive that on the contrary her own son has spoiled us all". Adwaita and Shribas both went to fetch Sachidevi and brought her in. Sachidevi seeing the divine form of "Nemai" was stunned. She saw that he was no longer her son Nemai but the Lord Narayana Himself—the Supreme Lord of the infinite Universe.

Shribas said : 'Mother, look, Lord Krishna Himself is before you. Nemai is no longer your son but is the Supreme Lord incarnate, The Father of this entire Universe is gracing us as a human being. Mother, would you lie prostrate before Him ?' 'Sachidevi at once prostrated herself on the ground before 'Prabhu' with deep reverence. She now thought : 'Many times My Lord, not having known you I have scolded and even punished you. I even beat you. Do pardon my offences.'

Mahaprabhu then placed his lotus feet upon the head of Sachidevi, his own mother, as she lay prostrate before Him ! He put his feet upon the grey-haired head of his own mother, whose feet he used to place upon his own head, the dusts of whose feet used to delight and gratify him !!

This convinced all and everyone that Shri Gouranga Mahaprabhu was no one else but the SUPREME LORD Himself.

The touch of the Lord's lotus feet sent down a tremor like a flash of lightning from the sky through Sachidevi's whole body. She raised her arms above her head and started dancing. Shribas Pundit had to stop her from dancing.

ARATI CEREMONY

Sachidevi himself, Malini-devi the wife of Shribas, and other elderly ladies all in a body then performed the Sandhya-Aratrik (evening Arati Ceremony) of the Lord and returned to their respective houses after it was over.

Mukunda, the great devotee of Mahaprabhu, was gazing at His lotus feet all along with unblinking eyes.

Mahaprabhu remained seated on the 'Vishnu-Asana' the whole day and evening in that trance of Lord Himself. Only at the dead of night did he return to his normal state.

This state of trance is called the 'Trance of seven praharas of Mahaprabhu'.



END OF SEVEN PRAHAR TRANCE AND ITS AFTERMATH

The trance being over, Prabhu raised on outcry of deep affliction and fainted away. His breathing stopped. All the devotees who were present there became utterly confused.

Prabhu's eyes were like those of a bewildered person. His body lay still but that divine Jyoti (lustre) was still emanating out of it. There was no tarnished state anywhere.

All the devotees then started singing the song of "Kunja-Bhanga" (Rousing of Lord Krishna and Shri Radhika from their sleep in the morning after the Rasa-Lila). This song made the body frame of Mahaprabhu trembling and all the hair on his body stood erect on its ends.

Having remained for about seven to eight hours in this swooned stage, Mahaprabhu finally returned to complete normalcy.

He now enquired of his devotees in a very natural tone as to what he had been doing all this time ? They told him that he had been in a trance and swoon for almost a full day and night.

Prabhu now lamented : "Alas ! All this time has been wasted. The time passed in vain without me uttering the holy name of Lord Krishna nor having worshipped Him. This long stretch of time has gone in vain for both me and you all." Indeed Prabhu now returned to most normal state as a simple man except that now he was more sweet, more affectionate and full of compassion for all. He truly became that 'Nemai'—the 'darling' of Nadia.



CONVERSION OF CHAND KAZI

Many Pundit Brahmins became jealous of Mahaprabhu's fame and success, and complained to Chand Kazi, the Muslim magistrate, against the conduct of Mahaprabhu, saying that his activities were not becoming of a Hindu. One day while the 'Nam Sankirtan' was proceeding through the streets, Kazi stopped the procession and broke the 'Khol's' (Drums). He ordered that this queer process of shouting the name of God in Sankirtana will not be allowed any more, and that anyone performing it, would be severely dealt with by the Law.

When Mahaprabhu heard of this injunction of the Kazi he became furious and instructed all the people of Nabadwip to stage a mammoth Sankirtana in the evening with every one holding a flaming torch in his hand. They were all to march to the Kazi's residence while chanting the Holy Names.

Everyone turned up that evening and a huge Sankirtan procession with flaming torches snaked through the streets of Nabadwip to the Kazi's residence. Seeing so many people defying his order, the Kazi became very afraid.

Mahaprabhu held a long discussion with the Kazi and suddenly touched him. At once the Kazi started weeping. He reached a highly ecstatic stage and started singing "Harinam" along with the Sankirtana party. Everyone was astounded for Chand Kazi belonged to the Islamic faith and for him to chant a Hindu God's name was unthinkable.

The Supreme spiritual power of Mahaprabhu and his Sankirtana were now realised by all, and thousands of faithless persons began believing Mahaprabhu and his teachings and became converted to come under the Mahaprabhu's banner.

MAHAPRABHU'S SANNYAS
(*WORLD—RENOUNCEMENT*)

Mahaprabhu desired that every nook and corner of this world should reverberate with "Harinam". To bring salvation to the people and to propagate "Sankirtana", he now earnestly desired to become a Sannyasi. First he expressed this desire to Nityananda. Then he apprised Sachidevi and Vishnupriya of his intentions.

Nityananda knew that this taking of sannyas was inevitable, so he remained silent; but Sachidevi and Vishnupriya could not bear such dreadful news. Their hearts shattered to thousands of pieces hearing this. Even in their worst of dreams they never dreamt of Nimai renouncing the world.

Words, spoken or written, fail to convey the intensity of pain, anguish and misery that Sachidevi and Vishnupriya suffered after learning of this desire of Mahaprabhu to become a sannyasi and therefore we shall refrain from attempting such a description. What was Sachidevi's and Vishnupriya's Sorrow could be realised and understood only by a highly sensitive person.

In Falgun, 1431 of the Saka era (1510 A. D.) at the age of twenty-four, in the small hours of the morning while his mother and wife were still asleep, Mahaprabhu came out of his home, paid due homages to the family deities, and entrusted to the Lord full responsibility to look after his mother and wife. He mentally made omissions to his venerable mother, bowed down before his beloved motherland Nabadwip and left Nadia for good.

He ran all the way to Katwa to meet Keshab Bharati, a sannyasi whose fame and name were known to all. The great

river Ganges was in spate and stood as a barrier on his way to Katwa. Without any hesitation he jumped in the river uttering "Krishna, Krishna, help me please to achieve my goal"—and swam across the swollen swirling waters. He ran and ran. Reaching Katwa, he prostrated himself before the great Keshab Bharati and entreated him to initiate him into the sannyas, so that he could behold his beloved Shri Krishna with his own eyes soon.

Keshab Bharati was hesitant. He knew that Nemai was a young boy of only twenty four, with a newly wed wife and an old mother at home.

Mahaprabhu with tears in his eyes begged and begged Bharati to initiate him in to "Sannyas". Keshab Bharati seeing his earnestness ultimately relented. Bharati stated that he was a mere instrument in the hands of Mahaprabhu, and that Mahaprabhu can get done through him whatsoever he liked him to do.

Mahaprabhu told Keshab Bharati that he had received one "Mantra" in a dream and he repeated that Mantra into the ears of Keshab Bharati asking him whether he thought it to be appropriate for him. If so, then the same Mantra might be given him.

Keshab Bharati acted according to Mahaprabhu's bidding, as if he was a mere puppet in the hands of his skilful master.

Before the initiation to Sannyas, Mahaprabhu had the hair shaved off from his head, took a bath in the Ganges and changed his clothes to that of a Sannyasi according to the age-old custom.

Seeing Mahaprabhu shorn of the beautiful bunches of curly hair, thousands of people congregated there became very sad. They just could not help weeping.

After his Sannyas ceremony, Mahaprabhu appeared before the eyes of the beholders even more brilliant and radiant

with his clean-shave head and his "Gairic" garb (cloth in Ochre colour), a standard dress for the Sannyasis.

After one takes sannyas his family name is also renounced. Keshab Bharati now named Mahaprabhu "SRIKRISHNA CHAITYANA" because now his mission in life would be to arouse the "Chaityana" (consciousness) of Lord Krishna amongst the sleeping masses.

The Sannyas taking ceremony of Mahaprabhu created the deepest pathos in the minds of all people, but this renouncement of all wordly possessions, fame, and family had to be carried out by Mahaprabhu to accomplish the upliftment of mankind. This sublimest sacrifice on the part of Mahaprabhu is heralded as an "Ocean of mercy and benevolence."



BEREAVEMENT AT NABADWIP

The trail blazers in our world always face opposition from people entrenched in conservative way of thinking and practices. Gouranga Sundara's case was thus no exception to this Universal law. Yet it must be said that the people of Nabadwip belonging to the different schools opposed to Nemai's way of thinking and methods of worshipping God really had genuine affection and love for him, otherwise as soon as the news spread like wild-fire that Nemai had left his home to become a Sannyasi, they would not have rushed to console Sachimata and Vishnupriya at the early hours of that morning.

The scene on that day at Sachimata's house was heart-rending. Sachimata cried and cried. Vishnupriya went on shedding silent tears, and the tears rolling down her cheeks incessantly drenched her Sari, and turned the soil of the courtyard into clay.

Such a spectacle of intense sorrow was not witnessed before by anyone. Whoever witnessed the silent weeping figure of Vishnupriya could not resist himself from crying and wailing for Gourangadeb.

When Lord Krishna left Brindaban for Mathura, the Gopis knew atleast that their beloved one was at Mathura. They also knew that at Mathura, Krishna was rather well off and was living a life of splendour. They also consoled themselves that Krishna had promised of coming back to Brindaban one day. But the people of Nabadwip didnot even know where their beloved Nemai had gone. Nor did they know when and whether at all Nemai would ever return to Nadia. These basic differences made the anguish of the people of Nadia thousand-folds greater than that experienced by the Brajabasis.

That Sannyasis have no fixed place of abode every one knew that. They also knew that sannyasis' life is full of hardship and they once having renounced Domestic life never return to their pre-sannyas domestic life. Sannyasis do not look at the faces of womanfolk ; far less that of their wife's. Hence the sorrow of the people of Nadia was more intense, more deep and their pangs of separation with their beloved Nemai cannot be compared to what the Brajabasis felt when Krishna left them. Krishna did not became a sannyasi Thus the sorrow, the anguish, the pain of separation, the bitter despair and the empty feelings at the hearts of the people of Nabadwip as experienced by them because of Nemai is unparalleled in the world.

To be able to see the Lord Hari is the main goal in the life of all living entities But unless one really and deeply misses

lord Hari and hankers after Him, their Sadhana remains unfulfilled. The Sannyas of Nem-i thus opened a completely new chapter of reaching for and realising the supreme Godhead through the path of separation—Biraha (বিরহ). It is rather very strange yet it is true that one gets more close to his or her beloved only when there is a physical separation between them. Physical separation starts the intense thought process in such a fashion that without one's knowledge the beloved one silently and unseen enters and sits at innermost core of the heart of his or her beloved.

Only the truly "Rasik" Devotee would be able to realise the essence, spirit and the depth of this path of God realisation.



ON WAY TO BRINDABAN, BUT BACK TO SHANTIPUR !

Immediately after the sannyas Mahaprabhu suffered from a terrible pang of Krishna-separation. "Where is Lord Krishna ? How can I get Him ? Where shall I go to see Him ?"—all these thoughts started churning Gourangadeb's mind. Such was his anguish that he was not in his normal senses and roamed hither and thither in search of Krishna. He started for Brajadhama thinking that there he would find his beloved Krishna. When Gouranga Sundar was thus longing for Krishna, he was under the spell of Birahini Radhika in search of her beloved Krishna.

Suddenly Mahaprabhu saw Nityananda Prabhu standing before him. He enquired of Prabhu Nityananda where he was going. Nityananda replied that he would be accompanying Mahaprabhu to Brindaban. Hearing this Goursundar was very glad and enquired how far was Brajadhama still then. Nityananda told him that they had almost arrived at Brindaban and beckoned Gouranga Mahaprabhu to look at the river Jamuna. Believing that the nearby river was really the sacred river Jamuna and that they had reached Brajabhumi, Mahaprabhu, without any further consideration, jumped into that river for a holy dip and started reciting slokas in praise of the Jamuna river.

After some time, Mahaprabhu was rather astonished to see Adwaita Acharya as well standing on the river-bank. He asked Adwaita Acharya how he could have guessed that he was on his way to Brindaban. Hearing this Adwaita Acharya at once realised that Nityananda had played a trick on Goursundar and told him, "It is our great pleasure that at last you have arrived at Shantipur." Gour Hari became very sad to learn that Nityananda had deceived him and by showing him the river Ganges had called that river the sacred Jamuna.

Adwaita Acharya pacified Gour Hari and explained that in fact Nityananda had told him the truth, because wherever Gour Hari stays that place is the real Brindaban. Also when one takes a bath in the western side of the river Ganges he is actually bathing in the waters of the sacred river Jamuna !!

Acharya could thus convince Mahaprabhu that Nityananda had neither deceived him, nor had he told him any lie. He then entreated Mahaprabhu to come out of the river, discard his wet clothes and change them for dry ones brought by him and accept his invitation to have lunch at his home.

Mahaprabhu graciously accepted Adwaita Acharya's explanations and invitation to lunch. All of them then took

a boat and crossed the river to arrive at Adwaita Acharya's home. Sitadevi, wife of Adwaita Acharya, cooked several delicious dishes for Lord Gouranga, and at the earnest request of both Sitadevi and Adwaita Acharya, Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu both sat together to eat.

"Nadia's darling Nemai is back in Shantipur"—this news spread like wild fire and all the people of Nabadwip came running to Adwaitya Acharya's house at Shantipur. This joyous scene of the re-union between Gouranga Mahaprabhu and the people of Nadia has been beautifully depicted in the book written by the Poet Karnapur.

Sachimata also came, but Vishnupriya stayed back at their home in Nadia. Seeing Sachimata, Gouranga Sundar immediately prostrated himself before her. Sachidevi picked up Nemai, took him in her lap like a small child, and pleaded to Nemai not to be so cruel-hearted like his elder brother Vishwarup. Vishwarup, after becoming a Sannyasi, never returned to Nabadwip or near it again. Nor did any news of his whereabouts ever reach Nabadwip. Where was he, what was he doing, or whether he was alive—were not known to anyone. So naturally the anguish Sachimata bore on account of Vishwarup could be well imagined. Now Nemai too had renounced the domestic life and become a Sannyasi, and if he too followed the same line as Vishwarup did, then what would remain for Sachimata to keep herself alive ?

Goursundar promised Sachimata that he would abide by whatever she directed him to do and that his body belonged to his Mother Sachimata only.

For ten continuous days Gour Hari stayed at Shantipur in Adwaita Acharya's house. Except for the first day, during all the remaining days Sachi Devi herself cooked food for her son Nemai. She cooked all the dishes that Nemai used to appreciate and relish. Sachimata herself not only cooked for Nemai, but she also fed Nemai with her own hands.

The devotees of Nemaï pleaded with Sachimata that she should now request Nemaï to return to his previous domestic life. But Sachimata could not agree to it. She only obtained a promise from Gouranga Sundar that he would not go to and reside at Brindaban, but would instead remain at Nilachal Puri Dham. If Gour Hari did that then at least she would be assured of getting news of her son off and on. People from Nabadwip made pilgrimages to Puri Dham often and Puri was not that far off as Brindaban was. Even though she would not see her son any more perhaps before her eyes physically, yet the news percolating about him would somehow sustain her and kindle the urge in her to live.

Mahaprabhu obediently accepted his mother's directives and then proceeded to Puri Dham from Shantipur on the eleventh day of his stay at Adwaita Acharya's house. As soon as Gour Hari left for Puri Dham, all his devotees and friends and relations were plunged in the deepest of sorrow and grief which became unbearable. Their hearts were at the point of shattering to pieces and they had no other words or thoughts except that of their darling Nemaï.

This scene perhaps was enacted once before in the Dwapara Yuga when Krishna left the Brajabashis of Brindaban and went to Mathura. Prior to this people only read descriptions of that scene of Brindaban and the anguish and pains of the Gopis due to the separation from their darling Krishna.

Today the people of Shantipur, Nadia and nearabouts witnessed the same scene before their own eyes and could thus realise what really passed through the hearts of the Gopis.

Gouranga Sundar thus re-enacted the scene in life what so long had been a mere description in some books only about the pangs of separation the Gopis suffered because of Lord Krishna. The slokas of ShrimadBhagabatam thus took a concrete shape five hundred years ago before the doubting eyes of the people.

ON THE WAY TO NILACHAL PURIDHAM

Lord Jagannath is Himself the Lord Krishna. And Lord Krishna Himself is the Lord Jagannath. Mahaprabhu in his search for Lord Krishna almost ran towards Puri Dham from Shantipur. He started for Puri Dham to see the Bigraha (idol) of Lord Jagannath there so that, seeing Him, he could quench his thirst arising out of Krishna-separation.

Only six of his closest Parshada-s (intimate companions), Prabhu Nityananda, Gadadhar, Mukunda, Gobinda, Jagadananda and Brahmananda, went with Mahaprabhu on his journey to Nilachal Shreekshetra.

From Shantipur their first halt was at the village Atisara. They all spent the entire night singing and dancing and praising Lord Krishna. Ananta Pundit, a resident of that Atisara village, had given them shelter at his own house.

From Atisara they arrived at Chatrabhoga. At Chatrabhoga the river Ganges has divided herself into one hundred different channels. At its 'Ambulinga Ghat' in the temple of Lord Shiva Mahaprabhu on observing the Lord Shiva Bigraha danced and danced out of sheer ecstasy and after some time fainted and fell upon the ground. The legend goes like this that here, at this Ambulinga Ghat, Lord Shiva after seeing this hundred channelled river Ganges had turned Himself into water, Nityananda Prabhu nursed Mahaprabhu back to his normal self.

HOW FAR IS MY LORD JAGANNATH ?

Mahaprabhu now started weeping for Lord Jagannath. He went on enquiring, "How far is my Lord Jagannath ? When shall I be able to see Him ?"

From Chattribhog one had to go by the river-way to Puridham in those days. The journey to Puri was not very safe, as the area in between was practically a no-man's land then and was infested with robbers, who robbed people of their belongings and often took their lives also. The journey to Puri from Chattribhog therefore posed a little bit of a problem. But Ram Chandra Khan, a well-to-do person, made all the requisite arrangements for the safe journey of Mahaprabhu and his retinues. He hired a safe-boat for them.

Aboard the boat Mukunda became enraptured and started singing the Lord's Name loudly. At once the boatmen became afraid and asked Mukunda to stop singing ; otherwise this sound would at once draw the attention of the robbers and they would ransack them. Mahaprabhu assured the boatmen that Sankirtan should not be stopped and as long as the SUDARSHAN CHAKRA (the Celestial Disc Weapon of Lord Vishnu) was there, a real Devotee of Him need not have any fear from anything in this world. The boat proceeded on its way and the melodious Sankirtana in praise of Lord Krishna continued all the way. No untoward happenings took place—nor did any robber come to attack them. The boatmen were inwardly surprised and astonished at seeing this.

At the Prayag Ghat the boundary of Utkal Rajya (the present-day Orissa State) began. That at last they all had reached Prayag Ghat and thus put their feet on the soils of Utkal

where the Nilachal Shreeksheeta grace the place of Puridham, gladdened the heart of Mahaprabhu. According to the epic book Mahabharata, it is at this Prayag Ghat that Yudhisthira during their exile had himself built the temple for Lord Mahesha. This same temple still stands today there, so the legend goes.

Before the Lord Mahesha Bigraha Mahaprabhu prostrated himself and he himself went to a nearby village there to seek "Alms". Soon he returned with plenty of food for all his companions. Jagadananda cooked food for all and they then spent the whole of the night there on the Prayag Ghat at the Lord Mahesha Temple singing the glories, pastimes, and lilas of their beloved Lord Krishna.

Next day in the early hours of that morning they again started for Puridham. On their way a tollkeeper demanded the King's toll from them. Naturally Mahaprabhu and his retinue had no money with them and could not pay the toll money demanded by the tollkeeper. As they could not pay the money the tollkeeper directed that they then would have to be kept in his custody till such time as the toll money due to the King could be paid by them. Mahaprabhu told the tollkeeper then that he is Alone in this world and he has no companions, so he be freed. Mahaprabhu was released by the tollkeeper out of compassion, but he did not release his retinue.

Mahaprabhu did not leave that place, but just took a few steps forward, sat down on the ground and started crying for his Parshada-s profusely. Torrents of tear flew out of Mahaprabhu's eyes and this sort of a thing was never witnessed before by the tollkeeper. He at once felt that Mahaprabhu was not a normal human being as we all are. He must be some one Supra-Natural. The tollkeeper then went to the Gouranga-Parshadas and enquired of them as to who really Gouranga Mahaprabhu was. Mahaprabhu's companions told the tollkeeper that Gouranga Sundar was no

one else but the Supreme Lord Krishna Himself. In this life he is called Sri SriKrishna Chaityana and all of them are his servants.

Seeing such a deep devotion the tollkeeper released all of them without insisting upon any toll money from them at all.

Mahaprabhu with his retinue then arrived at Bansdaha village where the temple of Jaleshwar Shiva existed. Bansdaha village was inhabited mostly by people belonging to the SHAKTA faith of worship. They offer "wine" to the God and call this offering "Ananda Bhoga". They insisted on Gouranga Deva's participation in this and taking the "Ananda Bhoga". Gouranga Sundar was a Vaishnav and in the Vaishnav School of God-worshipping taking of Meat, Fish, Wine et cetera is absolutely prohibited. Unfortunately, Gouranga Deva was not at all aware that 'Ananda Bhoga' as called by these Shaktas was in reality taking part in drinking 'wine' offered to their God.

Later having learnt about this he stayed with them for quite some time. He explained to them in detail about the various aspects of the RASA (रस) - the essences of the true ethereal and celestial Bliss and himself started "Sankirtana" before them. The Shaktas did not insist anymore on Mahaprabhu and his retinue's partaking in their 'Ananda Bhoga'.

After leaving Bansdaha, Mahaprabhu and his party finally arrived at Remuna. At Remuna the temple of Lord Gopinath exists. Mahaprabhu prostrated before the Gopinath Bigraha. As soon as Mahaprabhu prostrated himself on the ground before the Lord Gopinath, the "Flower Crown" with which the Lord was adorned fell upon the head of Mahaprabhu. This was an unheard-of Omen. All the devotees of Lord Gopinath then present at the temple could not believe what they saw with their eyes. Everyone of them seeing this unbelievable scene, began speculating amongst themselves as to who this handsome young sannyasi really was.

Earlier from Ishwar Puri Mahaprabhu learnt about the fact

that this Lord Gopinath at the temple of Remuna had Himself stolen and kept aside a pot of condensed milk offered to Him at night as His Bhoga, for his earnest devotee Madhabendra Puri, the Guru of Ishwardas Puri. When the temple doors were open the priest could not find that pot of the "KHIR" (condensed sweet milk) given as Bhoga. He searched and searched but could not find it. He was very perplexed. At night in his dream he saw before him Lord Gopinath directing him to trace that KHIR-BHANDA (pot of condensed milk) underneath His Asana where He himself had kept it aside for His earnest devotee Madhab Puri who then was staying at a garden near the temple. In the early morning the priest was astounded to find the same Khir-Bhanda underneath Gopinath's Asana exactly as he saw in his dream. The priest's entire body was shivering with blissful ecstasy seeing this and he then ran with that "Khir-patra" in search of Madhab Puri. At last he could trace him, and handing over the Khir-Bhanda to Madhab Puri the priest narrated the entire incident. Madhab Puri's joy knew no bounds. Madhab Puri after partaking that "Khir-Prasadam" did not throw away the claypot in which the Khir was kept. He broke the pot into pieces and tied all these broken pieces of that "Khir-Bhanda" at one corner of his "Chadar" (Anga Bastram) as a proof of what actually transpired and to convince the unbelievers that this sort of MERCY, KRIPA, KARUNA and MIRACLE was still performed by the so-called inanimate Bigraha of the Lord Gopinath—Who is no one else but the Supreme Lord Krishna Himself.

At the time of his final ACHIEVEMENT of the Lord's blessing—commonly known as SIDDHI (সিদ্ধি)—Madhabendra Puri just uttered one sloka in praise of his Lord which was "AEI DINA DAYARDRA NATH HEY (এই দিন দয়াদ্র নথ হে)." When Mahaprabhu narrated this incident of Gopinath's stealing of Khir for Madhab Puri and finally when Mahaprabhu

himself uttered this sloka as was uttered by Shrila Shripad Madhabendra Puri, Gouranga Mahaprabhu became unconscious to our normal eyes, having elevated himself to such a highest conceivable plateau of mental bliss. He went into a deep swoon. Only Nityananda Prabhu could then nurse Mahaprabhu back to the so-called normal state.

From Remuna they arrived at Jajpur. Innumerable temples exist at Jajpur. Alone, without any companion, Mahaprabhu went to each and every temple at Jajpur. What he did there is not known to us. Having spent a day only at Jajpur Mahaprabhu and his companions arrived at Cuttack.

Sakshigopal's Mandir exists at Cuttack. The legend of Sakshigopal was narrated to all by Nityananda Prabhu himself. When Mahaprabhu subsequently stood up and stood before the Bigraha of Sakshigopal to offer his obeisances, to the astonishment and greatest of surprise of all assembled there, every one beheld that Gouranga Mahaprabhu and Sakshigopal's Bigraha were looking exactly identical. This unique scene brought forth a mysterious and beatific smile on the lips of Nityananda Prabhu. The reasons of the smile remained unknown to perhaps all except Nityananda himself.

It is talked about that the "Bindu Sarovar" was created by the Lord Shiva Himself. He had created this lake by bringing drops of water from each and every sacred place of pilgrimage, that is TIRTHA. As the lake or sarovar was thus built up with Bindu Bindu (drops and drops) of water this lake is called the Bindu Sarovar. Lord Shiva also preferred very much the "EKAMRA KSHETRA" (একাম্র ক্ষেত্র) on the banks of this Bindu Sarovar. Bindu Sarovar lies near Bhubaneswar town. Mahaprabhu reached Bhubaneswar after first taking a holy dip in the river Mahanadi at Cuttack. After reaching the 'Ekamra Kshetra' Gour Hari started singing the names of Lord Shiva, Lord Rama and Lord Gobinda. He sang "SHIVA-RAMA-GOBINDA HEY" and danced in

sheer ecstasy before his beloved Lord Shiva [the legend goes that Lord Shiva is the best and the greatest devotee of Lord Krishna].

On his way to Puri, Mahaprabhu reached Kamalpur. Before taking his bath at the nearby river Bhargi, Mahaprabhu entrusted his DANDA (दण्ड)—the special stick carried by the Sannyasis—to Nityananda and then went to see the Lord Kopoteswar. As soon as Nityananda Prabhu got hold of the 'Danda' he addressed the Danda thus—"Oh, Danda ! the Lord whom I myself carry always at the inner sanctum of my heart, you are asking Him to carry you—this is not desirable, nor fair at all." After saying this Nityananda broke Mahaprabhu's Danda into three pieces !

When Mahaprabhu reached Atharo Nala (আঠারো-নালা) practically on the outskirts of Puridham, he asked Nitai to hand him his Danda, but learnt to his consternation that his Danda had been broken into pieces by Nitaichand. Mahaprabhu asked Nitai his reasons for having done so. Nityananda, replied that he had only broken the bamboo rod and if for that offence Gour Hari wanted to punish him then he would have no compunction to accept it. Mahaprabhu just said to him that in the Danda of the Sannyasis all the gods reside and it is surprising that Nitai considered a Danda of the Sannyasis as a mere bamboo stick only. With a saddened heart Mahaprabhu then said, "This Danda was my only companion. Now that too has been broken into pieces. It is Lord Krishna's will. Henceforth I shall have no one as my companion therefore. Either you all leave me and go ahead to Puri yourselves or let me go ahead alone leaving you behind."

To which Mukunda replied to Mahaprabhu that he should himself go ahead and all of them would be following him later. Mahaprabhu then went ahead alone almost on a run on his way to Puridham. Nearing Lord Jagannath's temple Mahaprabhu appeared to have seen the Lord Krishna in his

58

BALGOPALA form sitting at the top of the Jagannath temple and smiling at him. Seeing this Mahaprabhu increased his speed and running faster and faster rushed inside the inner sanctum (ଗର୍ଭଗୃହ) of the Lord Jagannath's temple. Immediately after his entering the inner sanctum and having seen at long last his beloved Lord Jagannath there, Mahaprabhu fainted out of ecstasy and fell upon the ground while trying to embrace his beloved Lord.



PUNDIT SARBABHOUMA

Pundit Basudeb Sarbabhouma Bhattacharya was the most renowned Vedantist scholar of India at that time and his reputation as the finest teacher of the Nyayashastra was irrefutable. Actually Sarbabhouma Pundit hailed originally from Nabadwip and had his own 'Tol' there where he had hundreds of students studying Vedanta and Nyayashastra with him. Many of his students later became themselves famous professors on those subjects after having completed their studies at his Tol.

Several years before Gouranga Sundar was born, Sarbabhouma Pundit had left Nabadwip for settling in Puridham at the request of Raja Pratap Rudra—Raja of Puridham—to become his Court-Pundit.

Sarbabhouma's residence was quite near the Lord Jagannath's temple and it was his habit to visit Lord Jagannath's temple every day in the early morning. That day too while on his daily morning visit to the temple, he was surprised to hear a hue and cry and found a very handsome and young Sannyasi lying unconscious on the temple ground and the Pandas (priests) and Temple Guards trying to take away the unconscious Sannyasi. Some of them were almost abusing that Sannyasi as he seemed to have defiled the sanctity of the Lord's temple by trying to touch the sacred Bigraha.

Sarbabhouma observed that the body of the unconscious Sannyasi was engulfed in a sort of Divine glow and all the signs of all the Sattwik-Bhabas (সাদ্বিক ভাব) were emanating from the prostrated body, which at once indicated to Pundit Basudeb Sarbabhouma that this young Sannyasi was of the highest calibre.

He directed the Pandas and the Guards not to lay their hands on Mahaprabhu's body, and with the help of his own disciples carried the unconscious Gouranga Mahaprabhu to his own home as Lord Jagannath's Bhog time was nearing and all the temple doors would be closed barring entry to any one soon. At his house Sarbabhouma then again carefully examined the unconscious body of Gouranga Mahaprabhu. Not only could he not detect any signs of even the faintest of breathing but also there was no movement of the belly even. This state is reached by a "Sadhak" only at the pinnacle of the Sattwik Bhaba and except persons who are born as "NITYA-SIDDHAS"—one who is continually the Achiever—this sort of things cannot happen to other normal human beings. Pundit Sarbabhouma was thus convinced that this young Sannyasi was indeed of the highest "Koti" (কোটি)—level.

MEANWHILE SEARCH CONTINUES FOR PRABHU

Lilamaya—Sportive—Mahaprabhu had arrived at Lord Jagannath's temple much earlier than his devotees who were following him all the way from Atharo Nala. His companions were not able to keep pace with his walking. They arrived at Puridham but could not see him. They went to the Lord's Temple and after they reached the Main gate of the Lord's temple they heard a lot of commotion taking place there. They overheard people gathered there discussing about a young handsome Sannyasi who had dared to enter the innermost sanctum of the Lord Jagannath's temple and, in trying to embrace the Lord, fell unconscious on the ground and one Pundit Sarbabhouma saved that Sannyasi from being man-handled by the temple Pandas and guards, and later took away the unconscious Sannyasi to his house for nursing and safe-keeping. As soon as they heard this, they knew that this was no one else but their darling Mahaprabhu.

The companions of Mahaprabhu were new to Puri and they had no idea who Sarbabhouma was, nor where he stayed. Providentially exactly at that moment there arrived Gopinath Acharya, who was a resident of Nabadwip and knew Mukunda rather well. Seeing Gopinath, Mukunda was much relieved and narrated the entire story and requested him to lead them to Sarbabhouma's place of residence. Gopinath Acharya was well acquainted with Pundit Sarbabhouma and both of them were also related by marriage ties. He led the devotees to Sarbabhouma's house and all of them found there to their consternation Mahaprabhu being still in the deepest coma.

From their previous experience they knew that, to bring

Mahaprabhu back to his normal senses, there was no alternative but to sing SANKIRTANA only near him. They started singing Sankirtana, but this time after having sung Sankirtana continuously for a period of NINE hours signs of consciousness returned to Mahaprabhu's body. Soon Mahaprabhu was fully normal and it appeared as if nothing untoward had happened earlier !!

Everyone was very glad seeing their darling Gouranga Sundar in his normal self and Pundit Sarbabhouma meanwhile had also arranged plenty of MAHA PRASADAM to be brought from the Lord Jagannath's temple. He fed Mahaprabhu and all of his devotees with this Mahaprasad.

After their meal was over Basudeba on behalf of the assembled companions showed respect to Mahaprabhu and bowed before him uttering NAMAḤ NARAYANA (নমঃ নারায়ণায়) and Mahaprabhu responded with "KRISHNE MATIRASTU" (কৃষ্ণে মতিরস্তু)—let your mind be always at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna. Hearing Mahaprabhu saying this Sarbabhouma realised that Mahaprabhu belonged to the Vaishnava school of the Sannyasis and was not a Vedantist.



GOPINATH ACHARYA
AND
BASUDEB SARBABHOUMA

Though Gopinath and Basudeb Sarbabhouma were related to each other and both were staying at Puri then, yet they had not seen each other for quite a long time. They having met after such a long time conversed to their hearts' content on every conceivable subject and topic. Gopinath of course knew about the past life of Mahaprabhu and told whatever he knew about Gouranga Sundar to Sarbabhouma, who expressed his deep curiosity about this young Sannyasi who had come from Nabadwip.

Nilambar Chakrabarty, the maternal grand-father of Mahaprabhu, was a class-mate of Pundit Bisharad, father of Sarbabhouma. The lineage and Nabadwip being the birth-place of Mahaprabhu pleased Sarbabhouma, but he was rather apprehensive that Gourangadeb being of such a tender age, would find it very difficult to faithfully follow and perform all the duties and Dharmas required of a Sannyasi. He, however, felt that if he could teach Mahaprabhu the Vedantas, only then it would help and strengthen Mahaprabhu's will to keep the Bairagya—renunciation of earthly pleasures. Sarbabhouma was also not very happy having heard that Mahaprabhu belonged to the BHARATI Sampradaya of the sannyasis, being initiated into sannyas by Keshab Bharati. He, therefore, urged Mahaprabhu's companions, including Gopinath too, that they should rather allow and permit him to teach Mahaprabhu the Vedantas daily to strengthen his mental level for actual renunciation as well as to re-initiate him into a better

Sannyasi Sampradaya like the Saraswati-Sampradaya or likewise by giving him the required JOGA-PATTAS.

महेश्वरः सर्वेश्वरः ॥ सर्वेश्वरः सर्वेश्वरः ॥
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BHATTACHARYA AND THE ACHARYA

These words of Pundit Basudeb Sarbabhouma Bhattacharya saddened the hearts of Mukunda and of Gopinath Acharya as both of them knew who really Mahaprabhu was and obviously Sarbabhouma, had he been aware of that, would not have then dared to utter such words as he had just said about Mahaprabhu.

Gopinath Acharya could not restrain him any more and enquired of Sarbabhouma Bhattacharya as to whether he really knew whom he wanted to teach the Vedantas. Gopinath declared without being asked for, that Mahaprabhu is the Supreme Lord Himself and all the signs that established the God-Head exist in Mahaprabhu.

Before Pundit Sarbabhouma could counter Gopinath, his disciples spoke first and challenged Gopinath on what basis was he declaring Mahaprabhu as the God-Head—"Ishwar Kaho Kon Pramane ?" To which Acharya Gopinath replied that the most learned and the well-versed ones who are capable of realising one as a God-Head based their decision on certain established signs and parameters ; he too was putting his claim on Mahaprabhu's God-Head, based on those exact signs and

parameters too. This resulted in heated exchange of arguments and counter arguments between the Acharya on the one hand and Sarbabhouma and his disciples on the other.

Their discussions were on the following lines :—

Disciples of Sarbabhouma—Ishwaratwa (God-head) can only be established on certain accepted suppositions and the proof of those suppositions. 'Kshityadikam Sakartrikam Karyatwat Jatha Ghatam' (ক্ৰিত্যাদিকং সৰ্বত্বকং কাৰ্বত্বাৎ যথা ঘটং)

Gopinath Acharya—Except by the God's KRIPA no one can know Him—God-head cannot be established by suppositions and proof of those assumptions only. Well, Bhattacharya, you are a very learned Pundit, a great intellect ; but, alas, you have not yet received God's Kripa. Hence even when God Himself is standing before your eyes, you are unable to recognise Him.

Sarbabhouma Bhattacharya—That we all have not been bestowed with the Kripa of God, is perhaps true, but that you have received that Kripa yourself you shall have to prove it too.

Acharya—Well, Bhattacharya, the so-called Sannyasi who is now sitting before you, He is the Supreme-Lord—I have known that and realised that. That itself proves that God's Kripa has been bestowed upon me. That you have not been able to recognise and realise Him yet, indicates that you are yet to obtain His Kripa.

Bhattacharya—Acharya, this person is styled -Sri Sri-Krishna Chaityana. Well, that he is a great 'Mohanta', 'Head of a Sampradaya, I can agree to that, but he cannot be an AVATAR, God Incarnate, for the simple reason that in this Kali Yuga of ours there cannot be any Incarnate of Lord Vishnu.

Acharya—Bhattacharya, you astound me. How could you speak like this being so well-versed in all the scriptures? The Shrimad Bhagavatam and the Mahabharata both these have given enough proofs of Avatar's descent in the Kali Yuga. As you have not yet been blessed, so even seeing these glaring proofs in the scriptures before your eyes, you are ignoring them. He who does not want to accept, no matter what conclusive arguments and proofs are given him, would not agree to it; as such it becomes then an exercise in futility.

Mahaprabhu all this time had been silently hearing their arguments and conversation about him. He now addressed Gopinath and said to him—"Pundit Sarbabhouma is not only much elder than I and therefore must be respected, but because he also has the well-being of me at his heart he is anxious to ensure taking certain steps which would protect his Sannyas Dharma. With that end in view alone Sarbabhouma wants to teach me the Vedantas and this should not at all cause any offence in your mind."

MAHAPUNDIT AND MAHAPRABHU

Pundit Sarbabhouma said to Mahaprabhu that to study and hear the Vedantas daily is the sacred obligation of a Sannyasi. Mahaprabhu requested Sarbabhouma to proceed teaching him the Vedantas as well as whatever he thought appropriate. For seven continuous days Sarbabhouma read and explained the Vedanta Sutras. Mahaprabhu went on listening without making even a single comment. Pundit Sarbabhouma's explanations and commentaries on the Vedantas followed the lines of Sankaracharya's thinkings.

As during the past seven days Sarbabhouma Pundit did not hear Mahaprabhu uttering a single word, he doubted whether whatever had been taught and explained for the past seven days were at all comprehended by Mahaprabhu. So on the eighth day the Pundit enquired of Gourangadeb whether he really understood what was being taught him. He also told him that if one cannot understand while being taught, that is to be told to the teacher ; otherwise how would one know that the student had learnt anything or not ?

Mahaprabhu replied that when the sutras of the Vedantas were being recited just as they are—he could understand those perfectly ; but whenever the commentaries on those sutras were given by Pundit Sarbabhouma then all the sutras became un-clear to him. It seemed to him that those commentaries were not giving the true meaning of the sutras ; rather those were self-imagined and self-opinionated, deviating from the main ideas of Veda-Vyas, the original compiler of those Vedantas.

Mahaprabhu explained further in support of his argument.

He said, "According to the Vedas, Brahma is the Greatest. Brahma is the Supreme Lord. He is Almighty. He is All Qualities and Wealth. He is Full. He is All. Yet you are depicting Brahma as being formless, devoid of any form."

"Again in the Shrutis where it is said that Brahma has no hands or feet—Apanipada ("অপানিপাদঃ")—then its real meaning is that hands and feet exist, but those hands and feet are Sur-real—APRAKRITA (অপ্রাকৃত). The Vedas declare that from Brahma the entire Universe has been created. Brahma is the Causative, the Subjective, as well as the Objective. When all these three subjunctives exist in Brahma, how then could Brahma's creation be unreal? Your explaining Brahma as being FORMLESS and Devoid of any Shakti is Anti-Vedic."

"All the living entities are under the control of the MAYA, but Brahma Himself controls the said Maya. Hence your trying to establish that no distinction lies between Brahma and the living entities are un-scriptural. These are your self-opinionated false imaginations only. The Supreme Lord Brahma is neither FORMLESS nor is He of any form as we generally know it, but actually ISHWAR is CHIDAKAR—His Form is concentrated consciousness. That you do not accept the BIGRAHA of the Lord Almighty is a definite sign of a "Pasanda"—an anti-God man."

"Veda-Vyas throughout has established the Causativity and Objectivity, but Sankaracharya whose commentaries you are following built an illusory theory of his own imagination and declared this Universe as FALSE !! If Brahma is the Creator of this Universe then how could this Universe be false—untrue? This world is not false nor illusory, as being tried to be established by you. This Universe is the outwardly manifestation of Brahma's Bahiranga Shakti. Yet Brahma having transformed Himself into this Universe is not at all involved in it—not touched by it. Brahma is NIRBIKAR. (নির্বিকার)."

THE LAST WORD OF THE VEDAS

"The Supreme truth in the Vedas is PRANAB and this is the greatest word in the Vedas (বেদের মহাবাক্য প্রণব). Pranab is the Bigraha of the Supreme Lord. But Acharya Sankar did not accept this and erroneously—rather purposely—having been directed to do so by the Lord Himself—took the regional, parochial word TATTWAMASI (তত্ত্বমসি) of the Vedas as the Supreme Word !"

"Now I shall explain to you the conclusion arrived at by the Vedas themselves. The Vedas speak of only three things—SAMBANDHA (সম্বন্ধ), ABHIDHEYA (অভিধেয়) and PRAYOJANA (প্রয়োজন). Lord Krishna is the Sambandha. Pristine devotion and love for Him is the Abhidheya. And the thing that is most needed to relish Lord Krishna's Madhurya (মাদুর্য, sweetness, bliss) is PREMA (pristine unselfish Love). Besides these three things all the rest that might be told and has been told are all superfluous and imaginary."

"It is commonly believed that the Summum Bonum of Life is comprised of four things, termed the Four Purusarthas, which are DHARMA (Ethics); ARTHA (wealth); KAMA (Desire) and MOKSHA (Emancipation). But the Fifth Purusartha of all living entities in reality is PREMA." Having said this the Mahaprabhu recited the sloka 'Atma-ramascha Munayah' (আত্মারামশ্চ মুনয়ঃ).

These unique explanations and commentaries of the Vedantas astounded Pundit Sarbabhouma. Now hearing Mahaprabhu's recitation of the famous sloka he desired of him his own explanation and the real meaning of this sloka. Mahaprabhu asked Bhattacharya to explain the meaning first. Pundit Sarba-

bhouma Bhattacharya explained the same sloka in nine different ways and fashions.

Mahaprabhu after hearing all those nine explanations told Sarbabhouma Pundit, "You are equal to Guru Brihaspati in intellectual power yet all your explanations have not touched the inner real meaning of the scriptures—as your explanations and the commentaries are based on pure intellect only." Saying this Mahaprabhu then gave forth eighteen entirely different meanings of that sloka and none of them touched even a single word of explanation as contained in the earlier nine such explanations made by Sarbabhouma !!

These unthinkable and unheard-of, wonderful explanations and commentaries of the scriptures, bringing forth their innermost and TRUE meaning, Pundit Sarbabhouma had never heard from any one before. Pundit Sarbabhouma was not of any inferior intellect. In fact he was one of the unrivalled Pundits of the scriptures in the whole of India at that time. Mahaprabhu's wonderful scripture explanation forced Sarbabhouma to admit that except Lord Krishna Himself no-one else was able to bring out such hidden and secret meanings of the revered scriptures. Sarbabhouma became repentant that because of his immense pride as a Pundit he had shown disrespect to the Lord. As soon as he realised who Lord Gouranga was, he prostrated himself before Him and Gouranga Sundar, out of his immense KARUNA (compassion), stood before Sarbabhouma in His Six-Handed Bigraha (ষড়ভূজ বিগ্রহ).

From that instant Pundit Basudeb Sarbabhouma Bhattacharya became one of the most earnest devotees of Mahaprabhu.



NEW LIFE FOR SARBABHOUMA

After seeing Gouranga Mahaprabhu in the SHADABHUJA MURTI, Sarbabhouma knelt before him and recited one hundred and eight slokas in praise of the Lord, in praise of Him. Sarbabhouma said to Mahaprabhu that one need not be surprised if Prabhu emancipated the entire world, but that He had cared to liberate Sarbabhouma out of sheer compassion was the most strange fact in his life. The study of NYAYA-SHASTRA and his own pride of being the greatest Logician—the greatest reasoner—had turned his heart into a ball of hardest iron, but just by a mere touch Mahaprabhu had converted his iron heart into precious gold.

One morning Mahaprabhu witnessed the SAJYA-UTTHAAN ceremony of Lord Jagannath, that is waking up of the Lord from his sleep. The priest handed Mahaprabhu the Prasadi Garland and the Prasadam. With these Mahaprabhu arrived at Sarbabhouma's house. Hearing him, Sarbabhouma got up from his bed and uttered Krishna, Krishna before leaving his bed. This chanting of Krishna's name gladdened Prabhu's heart and he handed the Prasadam to Sarbabhouma. Though Sarbabhouma had not performed his morning ablutions, even then, yet immediately as Prabhu handed him Lord Jagannath's Prasad Anna (প্রসাদান্ন) he unhesitatingly ate it up. Seeing this Mahaprabhu started dancing vigorously and while dancing thus, said to Sarbabhouma, "From this moment you have become eligible to achieve Lord Krishna. As you partook the Mahaprasadam immediately it was given you that itself indicates that at long last you have liberated yourself from the ties of the MAYA (মায়া বন্ধন)." "

Sarbabhouma became a more intimate devotee of Mahaprabhu since then and he had no other thing to think about except the name of Shri Krishna Chaityan, son of Sachimata.



LIBERATION LILA IN SOUTH INDIA

If Kabi Karnapura's description is to be relied upon then it transpires that Mahaprabhu had stayed at Puridham only for eighteen days before he started for South India from there, whereas the writings in the Chaityana Charitamrita of Krishnadas Kabiraj indicate that Mahaprabhu stayed at least for a period of two months at the Nilachal Puridham before he left again for pilgrimage to South India for his liberation Lila in South India.

Why must Mahaprabhu start on a tour of South India ? —being asked this question by his devotees Mahaprabhu gave them the explanation that he had to go to the south in search of his long-lost elder brother Vishwarup who had become a sannyasi and no news about him or his whereabouts ever reached him or Sachimata. He said, in the language of Kabiraj Goswami—"Sannyas Kari Vishwarup Giache Dakshine, Abashya Chalibo Ami Tar Annwesane." (সন্ন্যাস করি বিশ্বরূপ গিয়াছে দক্ষিণে । অবস্থ চলিব আমি তার অন্বেষণে ॥)

But in reality this was his pretence for going to South India to liberate the people there and to bestow on them

the "Para-Bhakti"—pristine love for Lord Krishna. Prabhu expressed his desire that this time no one should be accompanying him, and he must go alone. The devotees after much persuasion could make Mahaprabhu agree to take along with him one Krishnadas, a Brahmin devotee, who would be helping him on his way by fetch and carrying his drinking water, a set of dry outer clothings et cetera. The devotees were much afraid that should they allow Mahaprabhu to go alone on such a long journey – as he often swooned and fell unconscious on the ground – he might endanger himself bodily in such state of ecstasies and if at least on the pretext of carrying his drinking water and clothing one devotee could accompany him, then they would be somewhat relieved, knowing that there would be at least one to take care of him on such an occasion.

Sarabhouma Pundit requested Mahaprabhu that he must try to meet one Ray Ramananda at Vidyanagar, as he thought for the appreciation of Vaishnava Rasa Shastra there existed perhaps no one equal to Ray Ramananda and he could be the correct companion for Mahaprabhu with whom he could hold deep discussions on the RASAS. [There exists no exact equivalent of RASA in English (रस) as is denoted by this term in the Vaishnava literatures]

Mahaprabhu before bidding good-bye requested every one to bless him so that he could return safely back to them after completing his sojourn in South India. He also promised Sarabhouma that he would definitely meet Ray Ramananda.

Mahaprabhu started for the southern part of India with his heart full of joy and bliss and went on singing incessantly :

"Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna

Krishna Hey,

Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna

Krishna Hey,

Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna Krishna

Raksha Mum,

Whomsoever Mahaprabhu met on his way to the South he entreated them all to utter the name of Lord HARI. He urged every one to say only “HARI BALO” “HARI BALO”. Whenever people heard this sweet name of Lord Hari, involunterily they became excited and sudden surges of ethereal bliss and ecstasy passed through their bodies. After returning to their own villages having seen Gouranga Mahaprabhu and having heard the Lord’s Name from his lips they themselves straightway started pleading with the other residents of their villages to utter the name of Lord Krishna—“JARE DEKHE TARE BALE LAHO KRISHNA NAM” (যারে দেখে তারে বলে লহো কৃষ্ণ নাম ।). Thus in this subtle way Gourangadeb propagated the liberating name of Lord Krishna in even the remotest villages of South India and made many of them true Vaishnavites.

It is strange and difficult perhaps to believe that through SANKIRTANA alone Mahaprabhu attracted and finally converted so many people into becoming Lord Krishna’s devotees. But this is true and when finally Mahaprabhu arrived at the Setubandha-Rameshwaram, innumerable people had become devotees of Lord Krishna— became Gaudia Vaishnavas.

At Nabadwip Mahaprabhu never showed his miraculous divine powers, but in this journey to South India he performed certain miracles and emancipated many there and bestowed upon them the most unobtainable thing in this world—which is the PREMA DHARMA.



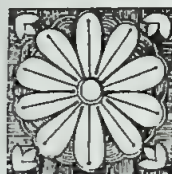
EMANCIPATION OF BASUDEB AT KURMASTHAN

Having reached the place known as Kurmasthan, Gouranga Sundar first made his obeisance to the venerable Bigrha of Shri Kurma (Lord Vishnu's Incarnate in the form of a Turtle in one of the Yugas when the entire universe remained submerged under water at the time of Mahapralaya), and then after accepting alms from the people there left Kurmasthan.

Before leaving the place he performed an act of miracle. There lived a Brahmin named Basudeva in Kurmasthan and he was suffering from leprosy. His disease was in a very advanced stage and practically his limbs had all been corroded by that dreadful disease and his body was full of sores infested by worms. Somehow Basudeva learnt that Gouranga Mahaprabhu had arrived at Kurmasthan and he dragged his almost limbless body all the way to the temple of Shri Kurmadeba. After reaching there he heard that Goursundar had already left Kurmasthan for another place. On his journey Basudeba lamented and wailed, and wailed on his sheer bad-luck and went on crying in despair. To everyone's surprise suddenly Gouranga Prabhu arrived at that place and immediately embraced the leper Basudeb deeply. Basudeb was at once completely cured of leprosy. He regained his lost limbs and his entire body and got up being most pleased and grateful.

Mahaprabhu advised Basudeb that from then on he should be preaching Lord Krishna's name to all the living beings with whomsoever he came into contact. Mahaprabhu assured Basudeb that if he carried out these instructions faithfully then soon Lord Krishna Himself would be accepting Basudeb as His devotee.

Saying this to Basudeba and having already cured him of the most dreadful disease of leprosy, Gouranga Mahaprabhu disappeared from there. It appeared as if he vanished like magic in the twinkling of an eye.



MEETING WITH RAY RAMANANDA

JIYAD NRISIMHAKSHETRA, a piece of pilgrimage, lies on the bank of the sacred river Godabari which reminded Mahaprabhu of the sacred river Jamuna of Lord Krishna's eternal abiding place Brindaban. Mahaprabhu reached Vidyanagar and started Nama Sankirtana in his sweet, melodious voice. While the Nama Sankirtana was going on Ray Ramananda arrived at that place with much pomp and splendour in a procession of Songs and Drum beatings. Ramananda found before his eyes a wonderful looking young and most handsome Sannyasi standing on the banks of the river. He had never seen such ethereal beauty in a human being before. Like a piece of iron attracted by a magnet, Ramananda approached Mahaprabhu. As soon as Ramananda neared Goursundar, GourHari enquired, "Are you not Ray Ramananda?" Ramananda replied in the affirmative and declared himself as the devoted servant of Prabhu.

Mahaprabhu then embraced Ramananda with such strength

that both of them became unconscious and fell upon the ground. The sublimest of all the Maha-sattwika signs came out on both their bodies, which were Stambha (stupor), Sved (perspiration), Ashru (Tears of joy), Kampa (shivering), Pulak (joy) and Bibarnata (Paleness). Both of them jointly started reciting Krishna's name. When the people who were taking their bath in the river witnessed that wonderful scene and heard the Lord's name being jointly uttered, they were much pleased and astonished. Along with Ramananda many Vaidic Brahmins also had come to take their holy dips in the river Godabari. They started contemplating, "This young sannyasi is engulfed in a Jyoti which is similar to Brahma Jyoti. And it is strange that a person of this calibre has embraced a Sudra (शूद्र). It is also very strange that having embraced Ramananda this Sannyasi himself is crying and tears are rolling down his cheeks in torrents. On the other hand, Ram Ray is a King like person. He is a great scholar and is not at all of frivolous nature. Then why at the touch of a Sannyasi, a person like him has become so overwhelmed?"

Overhearing strangers thus discussing them Mahaprabhu and Ray Ramananda both controlled their feelings and became their normal selves. Prabhu said to Ramananda, "Sarabhouma told me to meet you. I therefore came here and it is lucky that very easily we could meet each other."

Ramananda replied, "Sarabhouma loves me. He always desires good things to happen to me. Because of him I am able to meet you. You have come here to liberate me. It is not allowed in the Sannyasi's dharma to see even a King's follower, one who is materialistic and is of the basest of the base nature. Today your unfathomable Kripa (compassion) gave me the opportunity to touch your body and even get embraced by you. Your compassionate nature (Kripa-shakti) forced you to perform this sort of work."

Ramananda continued in the same vein, saying, "It is

written in the scriptures that this sort of things is natural only for the greatest of the souls. Such Mahantas travel to other places only to bestow Kripa on others to liberate them. The Brahmin Pundits who have accompanied me here are all much glad and joyful seeing you."

Mahaprabhu said in reply, 'No, Ramananda, what you say is not true. You yourself are the best knower of the Bhagabatam and witnessing you the minds of all other people assembled here have softened. Even I, a Mayabadi Sannyasi, is floating now in the blissful ocean of Krishna Prema after touching you."

Ray said, "As you have arrived here to liberate me, please stay here for at least ten days ; otherwise my mental improvement and restructuring will not be complete."

Prabhu Gour Hari stayed for ten days with Ray Ramananda and asked him to explain what is the Summum Bonum of life. It was only Mahaprabhu's own Grace and Kripa which enabled Ray Ramananda to propound beautifully the innermost and the real Summum Bonum of Life which was accepted and relished by Mahaprabhu. It is only through these discussions between Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Ray Ramananda that we come to learn about the true philosophy of Sri Sri Krishna Chaitanya on which his whole 'Sadhan and Bhajan' is based.

We have tried to elaborate this philosophy later in this book under the Chapter headed "Summum Bonum of Life."

From Vidyanagar our sportive Prabhu Goursundar entered into the city of Sri Rangam in the present day Karnataka State. He had passed through Goutami-Ganga, Mallika-Arjun, Dhabal Nrisimha, Siddhabat, Skandakshetra, Trimalla, Briddhakasi, Budhasthan, Tripadi, Bishnukanchi, Trikalhasti, Briddhakole Shiyali and Bhairabi and all such cities before reaching Sri Rangam.

Goursundar visited Siddhabat twice. When he first visited Siddhabat he stayed at the house of a Brahmin there who was a

devotee of Lord Ramchandra. Later when he went back to Siddhabat after visiting Skandakshetra and Trimalla he was surprised to find the same Brahmin having become a devotee of Lord Krishna instead. Being asked the reason for it by Mahaprabhu the 'Bipra' (Brahmin) replied that as soon he had seen Mahaprabhu for the first time, immediately Lord Krishna's name appeared on his tongue and since then he had been unable to get rid of Lord Krishna's name.



BUDDHISTS TAKING THE NAME OF KRISHNA

A nearby village at Briddhakasi had many Buddhists. They held a fierce argument with Mahaprabhu on the essence of scriptures. Mahaprabhu was able to countermand all their arguments and established the principle of Vaishnavism. The Buddhists were enraged and planned to take revenge on him.

They bought one plateful of unsanctified food, declared that food as Mahaprasadam and gave it to Mahaprabhu. At that very moment a huge bird took away that plateful of food in its beak. The unholy food fell upon the bodies of the assembled Buddhists. The plate itself fell upon the head of the Acharya of the Buddhists and his head was badly lacerated. The Buddhist Acharya fainted. Everyone then sought Maha-

prabhu's pardon. Mahaprabhu directed the Buddhists to utter the name of Krishna in the ears of their Guru (Acharya); and if that was done, only then would he regain consciousness—Mahaprabhu told them.

This the Buddhists did. Not only did their Acharya regain consciousness immediately Krishna's name was uttered in his ears, but since then none of the Buddhists could stop uttering Krishna's name

At Sri Rangam Mahaprabhu stayed for about four months at the house of one Benkata Bhatta and completed his CHATURMASHYA Brata there, spending the entire four months giving discourses on Lord Krishna.

Millions of people were converted to Gaudya Vaishnavism after coming in contact with Gouranga Mahaprabhu.



BHAGABAD GITA AND STUDYING BRAHMIN

At Sri Rangam there then lived one Brahmin who loved to recite Shrimad Bhagabad Gita. He used to recite Gita daily very loudly. But his pronunciation of the Sanskrit Slokas of the GITA was quite incorrect. People who heard his Gita recitations, taunted him and asked him not to recite wrongly and to stop such sacrilege. But it was rather strange that when this Brahmin used to recite the Gita in his own

fashion of course, tears flowed from his eyes and tremors passed through his body while reading.

Gouranga Sundar enquired of him how he could get such pleasure from reading the Gita when apparently he was unable to understand the meaning of the slokas and when his pronunciations were all wrong. The Brahmin replied, "Prabhu, I am stupid and have no learning. I read the Gita daily as I have been directed to do so by my Gurudeba. But when I start reading the Gita I at once see before my eyes that Lord Krishna is standing on Arjuna's chariot holding the reins of the Chariot horses in His hand and the Lord is instructing Arjuna. The more I see this scene the more do I get joy and pleasure. But as soon as my Gita reading is over I no longer behold that scene."

Mahaprabhu, hearing this, declared, "You are the right reader of Gita. You know the essence of Gita."

Prabhu Kahe Gita Pathe Tomari Adhikar

(প্রভু কহে গীতা পাঠে তোমারি অধিকার)

Tumi Se Janaha Ai Gitar Artha Sar.

(তুমি সে জানহ এই গীতার অর্থ সার ।)



LORD NARAYANA AND LORD KRISHNA

Benkata Bhatta belonged to the SHREE Sampradaya of Vaishnava School. They worship Lakshmi and Narayana. Mahaprabhu used to tease Benkata Bhatta, saying, "Why did your Lakshmi in spite of being such a devoted wife of Lord Narayana desire Lord Krishna as her beloved?" Bhatta replied, "Narayana and Krishna both are the same; but Krishna has more of Madhurya (*मादुर्य*)."

Again Prabhu asked Bhatta, "Why could not Lakshmi go to see the Rasa Lila?" Bhatta had no answer to that.

Mahaprabhu explained, "Lakshmi did not worship Krishna through the Gopis. Narayana is Sri Krishna's Bilasa Murti Reflex Prototype. This Bilasa Murti cannot attract the pristine minds of the Gopis. No one can get Krishna unless one first becomes a true devotee of the Gopis. Only then can the mind realise Krishna, otherwise not."

From Shri Rangam Mahaprabhu came to the Rishava Hill and there he met Paramananda Puri. Mahaprabhu directed Paramananda Puri to go to Nilachal Puridham and start residing there. From the Rishava Hill via South Mathura Prabhu arrived at Kamakosthi. At Kamakosthi resided one Brahmin who fasted the whole day daily. He fasted daily out of sadness that the villain Ravana had kidnapped Sita Devi who was no one else than Lakshmi Devi Herself.

Prabhu said to that Brahmin—"Listen, O Brahmin! Ravana did not even touch Sita Devi. Seeing Ravana approach, the real Sita vanished leaving behind an illusory (*माया*) Sita. Ravana, therefore, actually kidnapped the Maya-Sita and not the true Sita." These words of Mahaprabhu brought solace to the mind

of the Brahmin. Prabhu further explained that when Ram-chandra performed the so-called AGNIPARIKSHA (অগ্নিপৰীক্ষা) —Ordeal by Fire—of SITADEVI, the Maya-Sita disappeared in the fire and then only the Real, the True SITA DEBI came before Lord Sri Ramachandra.” Hearing this wonderful tale from Mahaprabhu the Brahmin after a long time cooked food with his own hands and first offered the food to Prabhu. After Prabhu took the food, only then did he take the Prasadam.

From Kamakosthi Mahaprabhu travelled to Tamraparni. From there to Tripati and thus covered Tilkanchi, Jiyadtala, Gajendramokshan Tirtha, Panagarh Tirtha, Chamtapur, Malayaparbata, Kanyakumari, Amlitata and then to the place called Mallar. At Mallar the Bhattamari sect allured and tempted Prabhu’s erstwhile companion Krishnadas showing him beautiful women. Krishnadas left Mahaprabhu, being thus tempted. On his way back Mahaprabhu could retrieve back Krishnadas from the evil clutches of that Bhattamari sect.

From Mallar Prabhu came to the banks of the river Payashwini where observing the Bigrha of Lord Keshaba he was filled with Prema. At this place Mahaprabhu came across the manuscript of BRAHMA-SAMHITA. He arranged this most valued and sacred book to be copied down. Brahma Samhita contains the essence of Vaishnavism. After that Prabhu arrived at Tungabhadra, having first seen the Matsya-tirtha. The people living at Tungabhadra mostly belonged to TATTWABADI school of thought. Presuming that Mahaprabhu belonged to the MAYABADI school of thought of Sankaracharya they did not first show him much respect. However later they came to realise Prabhu as the greatest of the Vaishnavas and made their obeisances to him.

Gouranga Mahaprabhu held argumentative discourses on SADHYA-SADHAN-TATTWA with them and was able to countermand their arguments and establish his own views.

These TATTWABADIS give predominance to MUKTI (self-emancipation) and KARMA (work) and consider these two aspects of life to be the Best. Mahaprabhu however placed PREMA at the pinnacle of life's goal. Prabhu told them, "Your sect has one great quality and that is you believe in the Shri Bigraha of the Supreme Lord. You do not consider Shri Bigraha to be illusory or a mere idol only as other foolish people so try to establish."

Prabhu then travelled to Phalgu Tirtha, Tritakup, Panchap-sara Tirtha, Shurparak Tirtha, Lakshmi-Kshir Bhagabati, Langa Ganesh, Chora Parbati, and from there to Pandupur where he took his holy dip in the river Bhima. At Pandupur Prabhu was very pleased to see the Bigraha of Bitthal Raj and in ecstasy sang and danced before the Bigraha. At that place he came across Shri Ranga Puri who was a disciple of Madhabendra Puri. Seeing Mahaprabhu Shri Ranga Puri reminisced his visit to Nabadwip where he stayed as the guest of Pundit Jagannath Mishra. He said that even to that day he could remember the excellent taste of the food prepared by Pundit's wife with Green Banana flower (মোচা). He heard that one of the Pundit's sons had become a sannyasi and he attained his SIDDHI (final achievement) here at this very place. Mahaprabhu then told him that the Nabadwip Pundit's wife was indeed his mother and the son who became a sannyasi and achieved his Siddhi here, as told by Sri Ranga Puri, was actually his own elder brother, Vishwarup.

From there Prabhu proceeded to the banks of Krishnabenna where he heard Kabi Karnapur's Krishna-Amrita being recited and arranged this book also to be copied down. Prabhu started again on his long journey, took his bath in the Tapi river. He visited Dhanu Tirtha on the banks of the Narmada and Rishwamuk Giri. At Rishwamuk he embraced the Saptatal tree. As soon as Mahaprabhu embraced the Saptatal tree, the tree vanished immediately. Seeing the place where previously

the famous Saptatal tree stood now empty, everyone was astounded. Everyone then realised that Prabhu Gouranga is Himself the incarnate of Lord Shri Ramachandra

Prabhu took his bath in the Pampa Sarovar and then visited Panchabati and Nasik. After seeing Sapta-Godabari, Prabhu arrived again at Vidyanagar. He directed Ramananda to proceed to Puridham and himself proceeded from there to Atalnath. From there Prabhu sent Krishnadas to Puri, so that his devotees could get advance information of his coming.

Jagadananda, Damodar Pundit, Mukunda all came running. Mahaprabhu stayed the first day at Sarbabhouma's place and there he narrated his experiences of all the Tirthas (places of pilgrimage) of Southern India. Subsequently, Mahaprabhu stayed with Kashi Misra, the Raj-Pundit (Priest of the King of Puri).

Raja Pratap Rudra was then the King of Puri. He was at Cuttack when Prabhu arrived for the first time at Puri from Nabadwip. By the time Pratap Rudra returned to Puri Mahaprabhu had already proceeded on his sojourn to South India. Raja Pratap Rudra then told Sarbabhouma, "How could you allow such a Jewel of a man to slip through your fingers?" Sarb bhouma replied, "He is God Himself and is not under anybody. But He has promised us that He will return." Pratap Rudra showed much eagerness to meet Mahaprabhu. After Prabhu returned from South India, at a suitable opportunity Sarbabhouma requested Prabhu to give DARSHAN to the King. Prabhu vehemently turned down that request and said, "It is forbidden for the sannyasis to see and meet kings. If such requests are made to me any more in the future I shall then leave Nilachal Shree Kshetra and go to some other place." Sarbabhouma let Raja Pratap know what Prabhu had said and this saddened the King deeply. With deep remorse he then enquired, "Has the Lord descended then to liberate and emancipate the whole of the world and its inhabi-

tants except Raja Pratap Rudra ? Well, as Prabhu has taken a vow not to see the face of a King I also promise that unless I can meet him I would not live any more."

As Raja Pratap Rudra was thus very eager to meet Mahaprabhu, the devotees of Prabhu requested Him to give at least one of his used outer garments and this they then handed over to the Raja. The King embraced the garment treating this as Prabhu himself, but this intensified his eagerness to meet Prabhu in person. After being pressed and requested by his devotees Prabhu relented and agreed to meet only the son of the King. The King's son came to Prabhu. The boy was young and was of a dark complexion. His dark colour (*ଆମ୍ଳ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ*) reminded Prabhu of Lord Krishna as He too had shyamal varna—and in that 'Krishna Sphurti' state of mind Prabhu embraced the boy as if he was embracing Lord Krishna Himself.

At Prabhu's physical touch Sattwik Bikaras emanated in the body of the young son of King Pratap Rudra. Subsequently the Raja embraced his son and felt as if he was embracing Mahaprabhu himself. This, however, could not quench the Raja's thirst for meeting Prabhu in person ; rather this desire started increasing as days passed. At the time of Lord Jagannath's RATHAJATRA, when Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra were on the chariot, Raja Pratap Rudra started sweeping the street over which the Lord's Chariot would pass. That the King of Shri Puri dham was carrying out such a menial job, himself evoked compassion (*Kripa*) in the mind of Mahaprabhu.

When Lord Jagannath's Chariot started moving Mahaprabhu went on dancing vigorously ahead of the Chariot. When the Chariot later stopped at Balakhandi, Prabhu rested himself in the nearby garden as he felt a bit tired after such a continuous and vigorous dance of joy. The perspiration on the body of Prabhu was dried by the mild breeze. In the garden Prabhu was reclining in a sort of trance. At that stage, Pratap Rudra

of those two above-mentioned years. More than two hundred Gaudiya devotees from Nabadwip, Shantipur, Kulingram, Shrikhanda every year traversed the long distance of more than two hundred miles (320 km), on foot. All the expenses of their journey were carried by Shibananda Sen.

They traced the same path over which GourSundar himself had arrived at Puridham from Nabadwip and all the way they reminisced on Goursundar's sweet memories and Lilas performed at those places. The intensity and depth of feelings of attraction they all had for their darling Gour Hari was unfathomable. They never came to Puri empty-handed. They carried all the way from Nabadwip to Puridham those eatables which Goursundar was rather partial to when he was at Nadia.

Raghaba Pundit carried on his own head the "JHALI" in an earthen pot which was prepared by Damayanti Debi herself for her Gour. One year Nityananda Prabhu himself carried rice required for a month by Goursundar. Shridhar Thakur came with Banana leaves, Banana flower, Banana tree—these were most relished by his darling Nimai Pundit ! What intense love and affection drove these devotees and with what urge they always travelled this long way just to have a glimpse of their darling Nimai is perhaps not possible for us to contemplate even.

All the devotees handed over Gobinda the things they brought for Mahaprabhu and requested Gobinda to ensure that Prabhu partook of all these foods positively. Gobinda used to tell Prabhu, "This has been brought by such and such person." Prabhu said, "Let me hold it," and then handed it over to Gobinda for safe keeping. A large part of the space of Prabhu's room got filled up with those foods brought by the Gaudiya devotees. Each of them used to ask Gobinda "Have you fed Prabhu with the food given by me ?" Gobinda evaded their questions skilfully because Prabhu did not really eat those

foods. Had Gobinda replied to them truthfully, the feeling of those devotees would have been hurt.

Gobinda therefore told Prabhu one day, "Your devotees have brought so much food for you, but you do not at all eat those. They ask me repeatedly whether you have eaten the foods brought by them. I deceive them, but how long can I go on telling them these lies?" Prabhu replied, "Why are you sad? Bring whatever has been brought for me." Uttering these words, Prabhu sat down to have his meal. Gobinda then started bringing item after item mentioning the name of the devotee who had brought that particular item. Prabhu with real relish ate those up. Among the items some perhaps were already not fit for consumption having been cooked more than three months earlier. Prabhu ate that up with such relish that it was surprising. The food which perhaps would have been more than enough to feed one hundred persons, all of that was eaten up by Mahaprabhu alone!! He even asked if any more food was left to be eaten!

Gobinda replied, "Now only the JHALI brought by Raghaba is left." Prabhu said, "All right, keep that Jhali, I shall have that later." The 'Jhali' brought by Raghaba contained such eatables as would not decompose or become stale even if those were kept for more than a year in storage. That Jhali contained wonderful, relishable eatables, most suited for Mahaprabhu's 'Bhoga'.

Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami in his immortal book 'Shri Chaityana Charitamrita' had said that about one thousand eatables were presented to Goursundar by his devotees from items of Nabadwip, Shantipur, Kulingram and so forth.

We are just mentioning only a few of them for the curiosity of our readers. Mango-Kasundi (আম-কাসুন্দী), Ginger-Kasundi (আদা-কাসুন্দী), Hot-Kasundi (ঝাল-কাসুন্দী), Lemon-Ginger (লেবু-আদা), Mango-Koli (আম-কোলি), Dried split Mangoes (আমপা), Mango pieces (আম খণ্ড), Mango-in-oil

(তৈলাত্র), Koli-Suti (কোলি-সুটি), Koli Powder (কোলি চূর্ণ), Koli-pieces (কোলি খণ্ড), Pickles of hundred varieties, Shukta leaves (শুকতা পাতা), Amrita Camphor (অমৃত কপূর), Chira made of Shali Kachuti rice (শালি কাচুটি ধানের চিড়া), Ghee-fried Chira (ঘৃত ভাজা চিড়া), Hudum (হুডুম), Ghee-fried 'Khoi' of Shali rice (ঘৃত ভাজা শালি ধানের খৈ), Black Gram powder (ফুট কলাই চূর্ণ) et cetera.

Prhnbhu took all these items as given him by his devotees with much relish. Actually the Lord appreciated and relished the affection for him which made his devotees bring such foods and take so much trouble for his pleasure.

With his Gaudiya devotees, who arrived during Lord Jagannath's Chariot Festival, Gourhari took part in all the festivities and sportive acts. He participated with them to clean up the Gundicha, witnessed the Netro Utsav, saw the Pandara Bijaya, Holy Bathing ceremony, danced and sang in the procession before the moving Chariots, participated in the water sports in the Indradumna tank, and in the Narendra Sarovar.

We shall try here to sketch briefly a few of such festivities only. Only once a year Lord Jagannath travels to the Gundicha temple riding his Chariot during the Grand Chariot festival (রথযাত্রা) and stays at Gundicha for nine days only and then again returns to His main temple at Puri. As the temple at Gundicha is not used otherwise for a year, naturally the temple courtyards, floors etc remain dirty and unclean Mahaprabhu along with his devotee companions cleaned Gundicha Mandir thoroughly. Not only did he sweep the floors with broom-sticks but also poured water from earthen pots and washed off the deposited dirt and grime.

Generally this sort of cleaning work is carried out by people in the menial services. But the day before the Grand Chariot festival started, Mahaprabhu called the King's own priest Kashi Mishra, Padicha Patra, Sarbabhouma Pundit

and entreated them to entrust him alone with Gundicha Mandir cleaning work. In serving the Lord servitude is very sweet indeed.

Tin Janar Kache Prabhu Hasia Kahilo
Gundicha Mandir Marjan Seva Magi Nilo.

[তিন জনার কাছে প্রভু হাসিয়া কহিল
গুণ্ডিচা মন্দির মার্জন সেবা মাগি নিল ।]

Padicha Patra handed to Prabhu over hundreds of earthen pots to carry water and hundreds of broomsticks Prabhu then personally distributed these to each of his devotees With his own hand he annointed the bodies of each of his devotees with sandal paste and proceeded in a team towards Gundicha to clean the temple and its courtyards

When Prabhu performed the cleaning up operation of the Gundicha temple, he felt in reality that "Krishna is at Kurukshetra. Tomorrow He would be arriving at his Brindaban Kunja." Prabhu looked upon Gundicha as the Brindaban Kunja and the assembled chariots of Lord Jagannath, Subhadra and Balaram presented a picture of Kurukshetra.

With his devotees Prabhu wanted to decorate the Kunja with the mind of Shri Radhika. Only the intimate-most of his devotees could perceive what was really playing at the innermost mind of Prabhu Gour Hari. The outside and inside of the main Gundicha temple, all the small and large temples inside the Main one, Jagamohan, Bhogamandap, Courtyard, walls, plinths, and at last the throne where Lord Jagannath would ultimately be placed, all were cleaned up meticulously and decorated splendidly. All these works were carried out by Prabhu himself. The fair-complexioned Prabhu, laden with dust and dirt, looked wonderful. While working he would all the time utter and chant Krishna's name. This is the lesson taught by Prabhu to all, "Carry out your daily work

meticulously but at the same time you must also be chanting the Lord's name."

Prem Ullase Griha Sodhe Lai Krishna Nam

Bhaktagan Krishna Kahe Kare Nija Kam.

(প্রেমোন্মাদে গৃহ শোধে লয়ে কৃষ্ণ নাম ।

ভক্তগণ কৃষ্ণ কহে করে নিজ কাম ॥)

While cleaning up the Gundicha some of the devotees washed off the dust and dirt with tears flowing out of their eyes. Some, on the pretence of washing the courtyard with water, poured that water surreptitiously on the lotus feet of Mahaprabhu, washing His feet and then covering up Prabhu, drank that feet-washed water and distributed that "Padodak" (পাদোদক) to the other devotees. That was another wonderful Lila. Kabiraj Goswami said that "engaging the devotees to clean and wash the Gundicha Prabhu enabled the mind of the devotees to be calm, brighter and of correct stature, capable of establishing the image of Lord Krishna in their purified heart."

After the Gundicha was thus cleaned up Prabhu went to the Indradumna Lake to take bath and started swimming and performing other beautiful water sports with his devotees. In the nearby AITOTA garden Prabhu took his meal with five hundred devotees. Prabhu sat on a lit le higher place with his intimate devotees and there Sarbabhouma praised Prabhu before all loudly and declared that "He was like an arguing jackal before the compassionate Mahaprabhu converted him and made his tongue suitable for uttering and chanting the name of Lord Krishna."

The Netro Utsab followed then. After about a fortnight again Lord Jagannath could be seen. The people thronged. At the front Kashishwar went managing the onrushing public and at the end went Gobinda with the waterpot. Puri Bharati was immediately in front of Prabhu and on both flanks of Prabhu were Swarup and Adwaita.

Prabhu's lotus eyes were thirsty to see again his beloved

Jagannath and with deep affection in his eyes looked and as if dreamt of the sweet image of Krishna, observing again Lord Jagannath.

When proceeding before the chariots, singing and dancing, all the devotees who came from Gauda Desha were divided into four parties. The main four Kirtan-singers were Swarup, Shreebas, Mukunda and Gobinda Ghosh. Each Kirtan party had two Mridanga players (*মৃদঙ্গবাদক*) and six other Kirtan singers. These four main Kirtan parties proceeded before the Lord's chariots. Two other parties flanked both sides of the chariots and one party followed the chariot. There was a party from Kulingram, a party from Santipur, a party from Shree Khanda. In all there were Seven Kirtan parties and fourteen Mridangas. All these seven Kirtan parties sang melodious Namkirtana praising Lord Krishna and describing His various sportive performances (*Lilas*) and danced in sheer ecstasy.

It was a strange impression that each of these seven singing parties had while proceeding along with the Rathas. Each Kirtan Sampradaya saw that Mahaprabhu was with them only and was also dancing and singing with them the song they were singing at that moment. Thus Prabhu was seen to be simultaneously present with all the seven sampradayas and dancing with them.

The Chariot of Lord Jagannath stopped moving as Lord Jagannath Himself started enjoying this wonderful Sankirtan and ecstatic dance of Mahaprabhu. Only after Prabhu gave just a little push the chariot started moving again. Prabhu Gour Hari cried in joy seeing Lord Jagannath. Jagannath also seemed to be plunging Himself into an Ocean of Love seeing Prabhu.

Muhurdristwa Tasyanan-sasinam-atyanta madhuram
Galannetrambhobhih Swatanum-abhisiktamarachayat
Jagannathohapyenam Nimiyahtairakshikamalai
Bilokya Premabdhau Nirabadhi Nimagnorabhadiba

—Kabi Karnapur

মুহুর্দ্দ্বা তত্তাননশশিনমত্যন্ত মধুরং
 গলম্নেত্রাস্তোভঃ স্বভূমভিষিক্তাময়চয়ং ।
 জগন্নাথোহপ্যোনং নিমিয়রহিতৈরক্ষিকমলৈ
 বিলোক্য প্রেমাকৌ নিরবধি নিমগ্নোহভবদ্বিব ॥

১১।৮৬ কবি কর্ণপুর ।

Gourchandra observed Lord Jagannath and tears flowing out of his eyes drenched his golden body. It so appeared that Lord Jagannath too plunged Himself in the Ocean of Love having seen Gourangadeb

With this feeling in mind that he was leading Sri Krishna to Brindaban as Shri Radhika, Gourhari asked Swarup to sing. Swarup, too, imagining himself in the role of Lalita Sakhi sang

Soi Soeita Parannath Pailun
 Jaha Lagi Madan Dahane Jhuri Gelun.
 (সেই, সোইত পরাণনাথ পাইলু*
 যাহা লাগি মদন দহনে জুরি গেলু* ।)

Shyamsundar sitting in the Chariot and Goursundar standing on the street of Puridham during this car festival started playing a beautiful game between themselves. If Gour did not advance, Shyam stood still and when Gour advanced slowly Shyam too proceeded slowly. If Gour stopped, the car stopped and if Gour went fast, the car also proceeded fast. Thus both Shyam in Jagannath's Car and Gour Hari on the road saw each other and played the game.

Every year in this way Goursundar along with his Gaudiya Vaishnavas played this beautiful game with Shyamsundar, seated in the car in the guise of Lord Jagannath.

The people who know say that even today this game is played by Gour Sundar during the car festival and only a fortunate few can see it.

অতাপিও সেই লীলা করে গোরা রায়
 কতিপয় ভাগ্যবানে তাহা দেখিবাবে পায় ।

MOVING JAGANNATH

At Nilachal Goursundar moved about freely singing Sankirtana and dancing through the streets of Puri. Day and night Puri and its immediate surroundings were full of his melodious Nama Sankirtana. When he passed through any particular street, people living in that locality chanted HARI BOLE, HARI BOLE. The dust over which Prabhu walked with his lotus feet, was taken away by people for safe keeping.

Prabhu's eyes were constantly filled with tears of joy, his mouth was constantly chanting HARE KRISHNA HARE KRISHNA Name, his movement was graceful like an intoxicated lion, his wide chest was covered with beautiful garlands hanging and swinging from his neck. Seeing this beauty every one—male or female—submitted to him.

In moonlit nights, with the southern breeze blowing from the seas, Prabhu came and sat on the beach with his devotees. He smilingly observed the beauty of the moonlit waves crashing on the beach. On some days he thus spent the entire night on the beach. At times the whole night was spent by him there singing Nama Sankirtan.

As soon as Sankirtan was started Prabhu began dancing vigorously. All the eight Sattwik Bhabas played through his holy body at those times. Gadadhar always stayed with him during those occasions and went on reciting Srimad Bhagabatam. Hearing Bhagabata recitations Prabhu got more ecstatic.

The same good fortune as had befallen Jamuna river in the Dwapara Yuga, or had fallen on the river Ganges, befell the blue sea of Puri as Gourchandra sang, danced and walked along its beaches.

APPEARANCE OF RIVER GANGES IN A WELL

At the Matha of Paramananda Puri in Nilachal a well was dug for drinking water. But the water of the well was brackish and not fit for drinking. Suddenly Prabhu appeared at Goswami's Math and enquired about the water of the well. Paramananda replied, "Muddy, Clayish." Prabhu then approached the well and raising both his hands asked for a boon from Lord Jagannath : ' Mahaprabhu Jagannath, kindly give me this boon that the river Ganges enter the well dug by Paramananda Goswami. Command the Bhogabati Ganga which flows in PATALA to enter this well."

Prabhu left immediately after praying thus. Next morning everyone was astounded to see that the well was filled with crystal clear sweet drinking water. Paramananda Puri fainted and fell senseless on the ground in ecstasy. Going around the well the devotees went on saying that the sacred river Ganges had herself entered that well. Hearing this Prabhu came to that place himself and raising both his hands said, "Any one who bathes in and drinks this well-water will achieve the same result as is achieved when one does the same things in the river Ganges itself."

"Not only that, that person's heart would become clean to be fit enough to bear the pristine Krishna Prema."



SEEING LORD JAGANNATH

Shri Goursundar would go to the temple of Jagannath every day and see Jagannath. He stood for hours together at one place and looked at the Bigraha of Lord Jagannath with unblinking eyes. While seeing Jagannath, tears incessantly rolled out of his eyes, trickled down his wide chest, drenched his outer garments and fell on the ground and filled up the drains by the side of Garuda Stambha.

Such tears no one could even dream of, not to speak of seeing them.

Every day Mahaprabhu saw Jagannath standing by the side of the Garuda Stambha. Garuda is the king of the devotees of the Lord. Prabhu thus saw Lord Jagannath because of his devotion to the Lord as a true devotee. He did not, however, look at Lord Jagannath keeping His devotee behind Him. If one witnesses Lord Jagannath standing from the point where the Garuda Stambha stands, the three Bigrahas of Lord Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra cannot all be seen at a time, but only the moon face of Lord Jagannath can be seen from there.

When Prabhu saw Jagannath, he always saw Madanmohan in the guise of Jagannath Bigraha and was thus possessed of the mind of Shri Radhika. If there would stand any one else by the side of Madanmohan, the depth of feelings of Mahabhabamayee Shri Radhika would be hampered. Prabhu felt that he was Shri Radhika and was observing Shyama Sundar in Brindaban. With Subhadra standing by Shyama's side, that feeling could not be aroused. Because Subhadra did not belong to Brajadham Brindaban. She belonged to Dwaraka,

Kurukshetra. When at times Prabhu saw Subhadra standing by the side of Jagannath Prabhu he felt that he was at Kurukshetra, and wished to leave that place for going to Brajadham. This sort of feeling intensified during the Car Festival. He considered Gundicha as Brindaban and desired therefore to pull the chariot to Gundicha as fast as he could.

Only to relish his own sweetness (স্বাদুর্ষ), that is to relish the sweetness of Krishna (কৃষ্ণাধুর্ষ), Gour Hari descended on this earth. That desire could be fulfilled only by witnessing the moon face of Lord Jagannath and that was the reason for which Mahaprabhu came to Nilachal Puridham.



TRAVEL TO BRAJA AND RETURNING FROM MIDWAY

Suddenly Goursundar expressed the desire to travel to Brindaban. He said, "I shall proceed to Brindaban via Gaudadesh and see my mother and river Ganges prior to poceeding to Brindaban." It was just the fifth year of his having become a Sannyasi when he started for Brindaban. The day he started for Brajadham from Puridham was the Bijaya Dashami day. Along with him went Parmananda Puri, Swarup, Ramananda, Jagadananda, Mukunda, Bakreshwar Pundit, Gopinath and many others. Some of them took leave after

Prabhu reached the Chitrotpala river and many departed after they arrived at Jajpur. Ray Ramananda accompanied Prabhu upto Bhadrak.

Gadadhar Pundit was also going with Prabhu. But Prabhu did not like the idea of Gadadhar's accompanying him on his journey to Brindaban, leaving the service of Lord Gopinath and leaving his own Kshetra Sannyas. Gadadhar with no hesitation said to Prabhu that his Kshetra-Sannyas might go to hell, and observing the Lotus feet of Prabhu alone was million-fold the service done to the Bigraha of Lord Gopinath. Prabhu said, "If you go with me thus leaving both of these two services of yours then that sin would evolve on me." Gadadhar replied, "Then I shall not go with you. I shall be going to see my Sachi-Mata." Prabhu just kept silent for the moment. But after reaching Cuttack he sternly ordered Gadadhar to go back to Puridham.

At that time travelling was not safe, as politically too the country was in turmoil. With the help of one high-placed Muslim officer, Prabhu crossed the Mantreshwar river by boat from Pichalda and reached the 'Bay of Bengal', travelling through rivers. After reaching the Gangetic Delta, Prabhu travelled up through the river Ganges and arrived at Panihati near Baranagar of to-day.

Prabhu stayed at the house of Raghab Pundit for a day only, stayed with Sri Nivas at Kumarhatta and stayed in the houses of his devotees like Shibananda, Basudeb, Madhab Das and others for a few days only.



AT BACHASPATI HOUSE IN GAUDADESH

Prabhu then arrived at the house of BidyaBachaspati Pundit. Bachaspati Pundit was the brother of Pundit Basudeb Sarbabhouma. Prabhu's arrival at Bachaspati house was rather sudden. Bachaspati with all the members of his family made obeisance to Prabhu. Prabhu told him that he would be proceeding to Mathura and he wished to stay for only a few days at his house secretly for the sole purpose of taking holy dips in the sacred river Ganges, without any one's knowledge that he was staying at his house ; and requested Bachaspati that he must keep his coming secret.

But as no one can hide the Sun, so the news of Prabhu's coming and that he was staying at Bachaspati's house spread around and thus reached the ears of the people of Nabadwip.

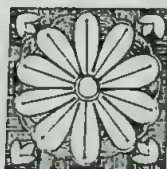
Millions of people started coming to see him. The ferryghat presented unprecented scenes. Thousands of people scrambled for taking their seats on a ferryboat. The boat naturally capsized in mid-river. Those who could not get into the boat, crossed the river swimming. Others prepared rafts made from Banana plants and with such rafts crossed the Ganges. Some just floated on Banana plants and swam across. Some put empty earthen or metal pots under their chests and being thus buoyed-up crossed the river. This unique scene of millions of people swimming or ferrying across the river Ganges just to have a glimpse of a young Sannyasi, not even related to them by any previous family ties or bonds, had never been witnessed before, nor have we yet seen such a scene even today in our lives for one who does not promise us anything materialistic.

Millions of people came to and demanded of Bachaspati to produce Mahaprabhu, so that they could just have a glimpse of him. All of them were chanting the Lord's name in an ecstatic state of mind. Hearing HARI name being chanted by millions of people, Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar, of his own accord, came out and stood before their expectant eyes. Mahaprabhu cast his lotus eyes on the assembled congregation and said, "Krishne Mati Houk"—"Let your mind be placed at the lotus feet of Sri Krishna".

Prabhu urged the people to utter the name of Krishna, worship Krishna, sing the name of Krishna and to ensure that Krishna becomes the be-all and end-all of their lives.

"Balo Krishna, Bhajo Krishna, Gao Krishna Nam,
Krishna Houk Sabakar Jiban Dhan Pran"

"বলো কৃষ্ণ ভজ কৃষ্ণ গাও কৃষ্ণ নাম
কৃষ্ণ হউক সবাকার জীবন ধন প্রাণ ॥"



FLEEING TO KULIA

The number of people coming daily for the Darshan (glimpse) of Prabhu soon became uncountable. Those who came did not go back. The houses, courtyards, fields nearby were all full of people. Hearing of such congregation Prabhu one day disappeared from Bachaspati's house without even telling any one where he was going.

Prabhu surreptitiously arrived at Kulia town. Bachaspati himself also was not aware when and where Prabhu had gone away. He declared to the crowd waiting outside impatiently, "Prabhu is no longer in my house. He has left for some other place." The crowd did not believe his words. At first they pleaded with him to bring forth Prabhu before them, then entreated him, but when none of these produced their desired result, they became angry and started abusing Bachaspati casting doubts on his integrity.

Bachaspati was already suffering the pangs of separation from Prabhu and this insult added to the injury. He was overwhelmed with sorrow and despair. At that moment a Brahmin came and whispered in the ears of Bachaspati that Prabhu had gone to Kulia. Bachaspati, hearing this, appeared before the surging impatient and angry crowd and declared before them, "Prabhu has gone to Kulia town. So please stop abusing me any further for no fault of mine."

The scene that Kulia town saw after this piece of news was broadcast, was unbelievable. The entire space of Kulia town and its nearabouts were filled up by millions of people, and amongst them Bachaspati Pundit himself was seen wandering about. At that time Prabhu arranged that Bachaspati be called to him. Bachaspati came and prostrated himself before Prabhu. Bachaspati told Prabhu, "You are God Himself. You travel at your own will and desire. Each and every work of yours is conducted of your own accord. But the congregated crowd abuses me and blames me, saying that I have got you hidden in my home of my own accord. Prabhu, you please appear before this public for even a fraction of a second, and if you do so then people would start calling me a Brahmin again." Hearing Bachaspati's prayer Prabhu immediately fulfilled his wish and appeared before the vast, waiting crowd. Seeing Prabhu

Gouranga Sundar the people were immersed in deep joy. Pundit Debananda of Kulia also came seeking an audience with Prabhu. Earlier he had done certain things which he should not have done to Prabhu. Thus he was guilty of certain offences. Compassionate Gouranga Sundar, seeing Debananda Pundit, pardoned all his sins.

The few days Prabhu stayed at Kulia drew such large crowds of people seeking audience with him or just to have a glimpse of him that it became very difficult for Prabhu to remain in solitude and reminisce over Krishna. So Prabhu fled to Ramkeli to avoid the crowd of such curious people. From Ramkeli he went to Kanai Natshala and at many places on his way he sang Sankirtan and danced in ecstasy. Ultimately he returned from Kanai Natshala saying that he would go back without proceeding to Brindaban, as was his original intention.

Why did Prabhu return? Two very touching episodes are related in this regard. When with a large retinue Prabhu was proceeding to Ramkeli, the then capital of Bengal, singing and dancing, the State secret service informed Nawab Hossain Shah of that news. Nawab Hossain Shah, hearing this, went up to the roof of his palace and from there he himself witnessed the unbelievable scene of a vast crowd of people singing and dancing madly, following a young handsome Sannyasi.

Hossain Shah came down and called his City Administrator, Keshab Chetri. Keshab Chetri was asked by the Nawab to give an account of the scene that he just witnessed from his palace. To this Keshab Chetri cleverly replied, "One Medicant has collected quite a few followers who sing and dance and go from place to place. Such a piece of news is not worthy of being reported to you. However as you have yourself witnessed the mendicant and his followers from the palace top, pray tell me what views you yourself hold about it." Nawab

Hossain Shah said, "He who does not offer anyone any thing of material value, yet millions of people follow him wherever he goes, he must be a great religious teacher."

"Bini Dane Laksha Loke Jar Piche Dhai
Sei To Gosain Ithe Nahika Sangsaya."

"বিনি দানে লক্ষ লোক যার পিছে ধায়
সেই তো গোসাই ইথে নাহিক সংশয়।"

The Nawab ordered Keshab Chetri that it should be proclaimed by the State Administration that through whichever city, town or village of his Kingdom this "Gosain" passes with his retinue all arrangements should be made to protect him, and it should be seen that no citizen of his Kingdom is allowed to disturb the law and order situation because of this sannyasi. Chetri did what he was directed to do by the Nawab, but secretly he sent a message to Mahaprabhu that it would be prudent and wise on his part not to enter the capital city itself.

Prabhu thus stayed at Ramkeli. At dead of night two persons, one named Dabir Khas and the other named Sakar Mullick, came to him and both of them prostrated at the lotus feet of Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar. Gouranga Mahaprabhu accepted them as his devotees and re-named them as SANATAN and RUPA. Those two were brothers, and both of them were Ministers of Nawab Hossain Shah. Sanatan said to Prabhu, "Mahaprabhu, the King of Gauda, Hossain Shah reveres you, yet it won't be prudent for you to enter his Kingdom with so many people following your footsteps. Also you are going to Brindaban and I feel one who desires to visit Brindaban should not be going there accompanied by millions of people."

Jar Sange Chaliache Lok Laksha Koti,
Brindabane Jabar Eto Nahe Paripati.

যার সঙ্গে চলিয়াছে লোক লক্ষকোটি
ব্রন্দাবনে যাবার এতো নহে পরিপাটি।

Next morning Prabhu returned to Kanai Natshala from Ramkeli. After reaching Kanai Natshala, Prabhu sang and danced in praise of Lord Krishna and then declared to all gathered there, "I am going back to Nilachal Puridham now instead of going to Brindaban. When I shall go to Brindaban, I shall be taking with me only one person." Saying this Prabhu turned back and on his way to Puri stayed for seven days at Shantipur. There he met his mother Sachi Debi and saw the river Ganges. After he came back to Nilachal Puridham Prabhu said, "I had hurt the feelings of Gadadhar, so my journey to Brindaban could not materialise." This was the episode which outwardly prevented Prabhu's journey to Brindaban. But the innermost and real reason which actually prevented his journey is detailed below.

One of Prabhu's earnest devotees Nrisimhananda heard the news that Prabhu would be going to Brindaban from Puridham. He knew that the roads and the way to Brindaban were not conducive to safe and pleasant, travelling on foot. So he felt much pain in his heart thinking of the hardship his beloved Prabhu would have to endure on such an arduous journey. He therefore started re-building in his mind all the paths, ways and roads in the most beautiful fashion. In his imagination not only were all the roads re-constructed and paved throughout beautifully so that Prabhu's lotus feet would not be hurt, he even planted beautiful shady trees by the road side so that Prabhu could take shelter and rest in their shade. Mentally he dug beautiful ponds by the sides of the roads so that Prabhu might get sweet drinking water and take his bath.

Nrisimhananda could build such roads, plant trees and dig ponds up to Kanai Natshala only. But after his mentally re-built road reached Kanai Natshala his concentration was disturbed, and despite several attempts he could not concen-

trate any more, and thus his mentally prepared roads for Prabhu ended at Kanai Natshala.

Nrisimhananda then predicted that for certain reasons his Prabhu would not be able to go to Brindaban this time and would have to return from Kanai Natshala.

This is what actually happened.



GOURHARI AT ADWAITA'S HOUSE

Sri Gouranga Sundar came to Shantipur from Kanai Natshala. He said that he would be going back to Nilachal Puridham, and started walking back along the bank of the river Ganges. Thus he arrived at Adwaita's Temple at Shantipur. A few days before Prabhu's arrival at Shantipur an incident took place at Adwaita's house.

A Sannyasi had enquired of Adwaita Acharya the relationship existing between Keshab Bharati and Sri Krishna Chaityana. To which Adwaita Acharya replied, "Keshab Bharati is the Gurudeb of Chaityana." As soon as this was uttered by Adwaita Acharya, his five year old son Achyutananda appeared at that place and exclaimed, "Father, how could you say those words ? How could your tongue dare utter that Shri Chaityanadeb has a Guru ? It is Chaityana Deb from whom all true knowledge emanates. If that be so, how possibly one can become preceptor of such a person ?"

Jaha Hoite Hai Adi Jnaner Prachar
Tan Guru Kimate Boloha Achhe Ar !
[যাহা হৈতে হয় আদি জ্ঞানের প্রচার
তান গুরু কিমতে বোলহ আছে আর ॥]

Hearing these words from his five year old son Achyuta-
nanda, Adwaita embraced his son and said, "You are in fact
my father and I am your son. It is to teach me that you have
been born as my son in this life !!"

The Sannyasi who had raised the question earlier, when he
heard this wonderful reply, expressed his appreciation and
exclaimed that this boy of Adwaita Acharya was really fit to
be the son of such a Pundit as Adwaita.

Adwaita was pondering over the words uttered by his son
Achyut and had a feeling that Chaityana's most intimate
devotee had been born as his son. It was exactly at that
moment that Gouranga Sundar along with his closest devotees
arrived there. Gourhari hearing all that Adwaita's son
Achyut had told was very pleased. He made Achyut sit on
his lap, and drenched Achyut's body with joyous tears.



SACHI DEVI COOKS FOR NEMAI—POWER OF SHAK

Adwaita, also known as Sitanath, sent the news of Gouranga Sundar's arrival to Sachimata. Gangadas Pundit brought Sachimata with him to Shantipur at Sitanath's house. Seeing his mother, Gourchandra prostrated himself on the ground before her and said that if she looked at any one with compassion in her heart, then that person was sure to have devotion for Lord Krishna. Seeing Gouranga Sundar's sweet face after such a long time Sachi Devi was almost in a trance for some time. After some time she recovered herself and proceeded to cook for her son. Mother knew that Nemai loved to eat shak (eatable herbs), hence she cooked twenty different dishes of shak, besides other dishes. While taking his meal Prabhu with a smiling face said about the different curative and devotive powers of various shaks. Prabhu said that certain types of shaks, when eaten, impart attraction for Lord Krishna, and some other shaks ensure that the person who eats those shaks would always be in the company of Baishnabas in all his re-births. Some shaks ensure good health, so that "Krishna-Bhakti" could be obtained easily.

Prabhu Bale Ei Je Achyut Name Shak
Ihar Bhojone Hai Krishne Anurag.
Patol Bastuk Kalo Shaker Bhojane
Janme Janme Biharai Baishnaber Sane
Salincha Hilancha Shak Bhakshan Karile
Arogya Thakoye Tar "Krishna-Bhakti" Mile.

[প্রভু বলে এই যে অচ্যুত নামে শাক
ইহার ভোজনে হয় কৃষ্ণ অনুরাগ ।
পটোল বাস্তুক কাল শাকের ভোজনে
জন্মে জন্মে বিহরয় বৈষ্ণবের সনে ।

সালিঞ্চ হিলঞ্চ শাক ভক্ষণ করিলে
আরোগ্য থাকয়ে তার কৃষ্ণ ভক্তি মিলে ।]



EIGHT SLOKAS COMPOSED BY MURARI

Having rested after his meal Prabhu Goursundar addressed Murari Gupta and said, "Murari, I understand you have composed a poem of eight slokas in praise of dear Lord Shri Ramchandra. Recite them to me." Murari then recited—

"Agre Dhanurdhar-Barah Kanakojjwalango,
Jyesthanusebanarato Barbhusanadhyah
Sesaka shyadhambarlakshnam Jasya Ramam
Jagattrayaguram Satatam Bhajami.

[অগ্রে ধনুর্ধরবরঃ কনকোজ্জ্বলাঙ্গো,
জ্যেষ্ঠানুসেবনরতো বরভূষণাঢ্যঃ
শেষাখ্যাদ্যম্বরলক্ষণম্ যস্য রামং
জগত্ৰয়গুরুং সততং ভজামি ॥]

Prabhu heard the slokas recited by Murari patiently. He then directed Murari to interpret his slokas.

Murari then explained and interpreted very sweetly all his eight slokas. Gourhari was overjoyed to hear Murari's slokas and their interpretation, praising Lord Shri Ramchandra, and suddenly placed his lotus feet on the head of Murari and proclaimed that in all his rebirths Murari would have no difficulty placed in his way to become the greatest devotee of

Lord Shri Ramchandra. That was the boon Gourhari then gave Murari. Earlier, in his seven Prahar trances Mahaprabhu had divulged the secret that in one of his previous births Murari was the great devotee HANUMAN.



MIRACULOUS CURE OF A LEPER

A leper came before Prabhu and cried in deep anguish. He pleaded for mercy and requested Prabhu to cure him of his painful malady.

Prabhu told him that as he had abused a real Baishnab, that unpardonable sin had caused him this disease. The man admitted that what was said of his having abused a real Baishnab was true and enquired what course of action was then left to him.

Prabhu simply said that as he had committed sin abusing Shribas Pundit, hence unless Shribas pardoned him he could not help him at all. He had to go to Shribas and ask for his forgiveness. The leper being already penitent ran to Shribas Pundit and begged for his mercy touching his feet. Shribas being a true Baishnab immediately pardoned the leper and the leper was instantly cured.

Gouranga Sundar, if he had so wished, could have easily cured that leper, but in order to teach everyone the qualities

of Shribas Pundit as a true Baishnab, he sent the leper to Shribas, and Shribas did not fail his Mahaprabhu. As a true Baishnab, Shribas forgave the leper.



TITHI ARADHANA OF MADHABENDRA PURI

Madhabendra Puri was the Gurudeb of Adwaita Acharya. The day of Gurupuja, also known as VYAS PUJA, arrived. Adwaita Acharya was very happy, because prior to this he never had an opportunity to celebrate GURU-PUJA when Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was also present. Madhabendra Puri was also the 'PARAM-GURU' of Gouranga Mahaprabhu. The origin of GAUDIYA VAISHNAVA SAMPRADYA is from Madhabendra Puri.

The pomp, grandeur and splendour as well as the deep devotion and sobriety with which the 'Guru-Puja' of Param-Guru Shri Madhabendra Puri was performed by Adwaita Acharya marvelled Mahaprabhu even

Prabhu said that Acharya was the Incarnate of Lord Shiva, otherwise how could he possibly get hold of such wealth to perform the 'Guru Puja' in such a grand style? Such wealth is only possible of Lord Shiva.

Sachimata herself had cooked delicious dishes for Param Guru Madhabendraji's Puja celebrations. Mahaprabhu sat down to eat with gladness in his heart and declared that

whoever partook prasadam in that Madhabendra Aradhana tithi acquired devotion for Lord Gobinda.

After his meal was over, Prabhu with his own lotus hands distributed garlands and sandal paste to all the assembled devotees individually. This made all the Baishnabas extremely joyous and they chanted Harinam loudly.

Adwaita Acharya himself was the most happy person as he realised that the Lord of BAIKUNTHA himself was present in his GURU Aradhana Tithi day. Adwaita knew Mahaprabhu as the Supreme Lord Himself, because it was Adwaita himself who seeing the miseries and pain of the common people had prayed to the Supreme Lord to descend on this earth. Not only that, Adwaita Acharya had promised that if he was not successful in his mission and failed to bring the Lord of Baikuntha to this earth he would no longer consider it fit for him to continue with his life any more.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
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 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

AT KUMARHATTA IN SHRIBAS TEMPLE

From Shantipur Prabhu arrived at Shribas Temple in Kumarhatta. When Prabhu arrived there Shribas Pundit was then deeply meditating on Lord Krishna. Suddenly he saw before him the Lord whom he was meditating upon. The news of Prabhu's arrival spread throughout and all the devotees came running. Acharya Purandar, Shibananda Sen, Basudeb Dutta,

to name a few, were among those devotees. Basudeb caught hold of Gouranga Sundar's lotus feet and started crying loudly. Mahaprabhu assured Basudeb that his corporal body belonged to his devotee Basudeb Dutta alone.

Hearing such a proclamation from the mouth of Mahaprabhu all the devotees gave a loud, joyous cheer.

One day while staying at Shribas's house, Prabhu Gourchandra enquired of Shribas how he managed to meet the family expenses. Because he never saw Shribas going out of his house nor was his family a small one, Prabhu wondered therefore how the family expenses were met. Shribas replied, "Prabhu, whatever is written in one's fate is obtainable by him." hearing that Prabhu said, 'You then better become a Sannyasi.'

Shribas said, "I cannot do that too." Prabhu said, "It is strange. You would neither become a Sannyasi nor would you go to anyone else's door begging for food and alms. Then how could you maintain the needs of your family is not clear to me."

Pundit Shribas then clapped his hands thrice and uttered, "One, two, three,—this I declare."

Mahaprabhu wanted Shribas to explain what exactly he meant by one, two and three. Shribas replied that for one day they would starve if they could not get any food, on the second day also they would starve and if on the third day, too, they had to starve, then all of them would commit suicide by drowning themselves in the river Ganga.

Hearing Shribas utter these words Gourhari groaned in pain and said, "Shribas, what did you say ? How dare you say that you would starve for want of food ? Even Lakshmi Devi may have to beg any day, but poverty would never dare touch your house. One who whole-heartedly meditates on Me alone, I Myself bring everything for his sustenance."

Prabhu stayed for three whole days at Shribas's house and then set out for Raghab Pundit's Temple at Panihati

Goursundar, the most compassionate soul ever seen on this earth, arrived without any notice at the house of Raghav Pundit at Panihati. The unexpected arrival of the person whom Raghav worshipped, opened the flood-gate of supreme joy in his mind. Gadadhar Das, Parameshwar Das, Purandar Pundit, Raghunath Baidya and many others, all of whose darling and beloved Mahaprabhu was, came running to Panihati at Raghav Pundit's Temple. The joyous re-union of the Lord with his devotees beggars any description.

While staying there, Prabhu called Raghav and explained to him alone the real Tattwa (fundamental truth) of Netai Chand.

Raghav Tomare Ami Nija Gopya Koi,

Amar Dwitiya Nai-Nityananda Boi.

Ei Nityananda Jei Karaen Amare,

Sei Kari Ei Ami Balilo Tomare.

[রাঘব তোমারে আমি নিজ গোপ্য কই,

আমার দ্বিতীয় নাই নিত্যানন্দ বই ॥

এই নিত্যানন্দ যেই করায়েন আমারে,

সে-ই করি এই আমি বলিলো তোমারে ॥]

Prabhu divulged the real identity of Nityananda Prabhu, for doubts very often arose in the minds of Prabhu's devotees as to who Nityananda really was. Today Prabhu Himself put to rest all their speculations. Mahaprabhu said that so long he had kept it as a top secret that except Nityananda none equalled him. And, whatever Nityananda desired or wanted Gouranga to perform or act, Prabhu acted at Netai Chand's bidding and carried out all his wishes.



BHAGABAT ACHARYA AT BARANAGORE

From Panihati Gourangadeb reached Baranagore. He stayed there at the house of a very fortunate Brahmin who was a great scholar of Shrimad Bhagabatam. Seeing that Prabhu himself was present, the Brahmin Pundit considered himself very fortunate and recited Shrimad Bhagabatam explaining Bhagabatam with a lot of devotion and 'RAS' (রস, essence of Joy). Prabhu was deeply moved hearing such Bhakti-Rasamay discourse on Bhagabatam and exclaimed 'Bolo, Bolo'—proceed further, proceed futher, and the Brahmin Pundit fulfilled Prabhu's desire.

Prabhu danced in ecstasy. Hearing the slokas in high praise of Bhakti (devotion) Gourhari was absorbed in the deepest feelings of Bhakti and fell down upon the ground senseless. This continued up to the small hours of the morning. Having regained his senses, Mahaprabhu declared that so far he had not heard such a beautiful discourse on Srimad Bhagabatam and conferred upon the Brahmin the title of "Bhagabat-Acharya" (Greatest preacher of Shrimad Bhagabatam) and ordered him not to do any other work except holding discourses on Shrimad Bhagabatam. Today that Brahmin's house is known as 'PATHBARI' (পাঠবাড়ী).

Having thus spent his days in joy with his devotees in Bengal, Gouranga Mahaprabhu returned to Puridham.

TRAVEL TO BRAJADHAM THROUGH FORESTS

Gouranga Prabhu desired very much to visit Brajadham. This time he was determined that he would be going alone. But at the earnest pleadings of his devotees, Prabhu agreed to take only Balabhadra Bhattacharya with him. Balabhadra was entrusted with carrying the pitcher of drinking water, outer garments for a change of clothings on the long journey, and with seeking alms from the people on their way for their bodily sustenance. On his first ever journey to Brajadham, Nityananda had brought him back wilefully and did not allow him at all to proceed to Brindaban. On his second attempt Prabhu could go up to 'Kanai Natshala' only and had to return. This time, therefore, Prabhu surreptitiously left for Brindadan at the early hours of the morning after waking up Balabhadra silently so that no one else would get up from his slumber. He did not take the main paths or roads usually traversed by people going to Brindaban.

Prabhu entered the deep forests keeping Cuttack on his right. Through the otherwise silent forest Gourhari went forward trudging along singing Krishna-Krishna. Wild elephants, tigers, and other wild beasts gave way to Mahaprabhu. Not through one or two, but through thousands of tigers, wild boars, elephants, Prabhu made his way. These wild beasts did not harm Prabhu, nor did they even try to attack him. Rather it appeared that in deep reverence these wild beasts stood back from his path and also ensured that Prabhu had a safe journey throughout. One may wonder how possibly these are known to us. Well, Balabhadra Bhattacharya who was the only companion of Prabhu on this journey narrated that he

himself in his whole life had never seen such a gathering of wild beasts and was very afraid seeing the tigers, wild boars and feared a sudden attack from them any moment. But he was astonished that Prabhu went on non-chalantly, apparently having no sense of what was taking place around him and those beasts were politely giving him way. It could possibly be that the loud chanting of HARE KRISHNA entering the ears of those wild animals liberated their souls.

Prabhu Jagadbandhu Sundar also instructed that one should chant Hare Krishna Nam so loudly that the trees, birds and animals at far off distances could also hear that 'Maha-Mantra' and thus get liberated hearing it. Was that the reason then that Mahaprabhu selected his path through the forests ?

From Balabhadra we learn that when Prabhu was thus proceeding totally unmindful of his surroundings, his lotus feet once touched the body of a tiger lying on the road. Prabhu immediately uttered Krishna-Krishna, and lo, that tiger got up and started dancing, uttering Krishna, Krishna !! The saviour of all entities Lord Gouranga Mahaprabhu was taking his bath in a river and a herd of wild elephants came just to that spot to drink water. Prabhu, while bathing, took some water of the river in his lotus-hands and sprinkled that water on the heads and bodies of the assembled elephants and asked them, "Krishna Kaho—Krishna Kaho" (কৃষ্ণ কহো—কৃষ্ণ কহো). When that water touched the elephants, they started chanting Krishna Nam, and danced in joy. Some of the elephants even fell on the ground in apparently deep ecstasy.

Prabhu proceeded through the forest singing Nam-Sankirtan loudly. Assuming that sound to be coming from peacocks, many deer came running towards him. Some six or seven tigers also came. Those tigers and the deer went along with Prabhu side by side. It was an unbelievable scene.

Hearing the sweet Name of Lord Krishna from the lips of Sachidulal (son of Sachi) tigers and elephants in the forest

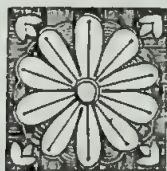
started crying and dancing together in joy. They forgot their natural animosity against each other. Peacocks danced in joy and they travelled along with Prabhu shouting Krishna, Krishna !! The Supreme Charmer Goursundar chanted Hare Krishna Nam loudly. Hearing the melodious 'Maha-Mantra' emanating from the sweet lips of Gourhari Himself the dried up trees and creepers became alive and looked freshest of the fresh. Living and non-living entities of Jharkhanda all became mad with joy hearing Krishna Nam.

This wonderful scene can neither be described as a Heavenly scene, nor can it be said to be that of Goloka, because on the path of Jharkhanda, when Prabhu was proceeding towards Brindaban, only then did this unbelievable and the most wonderful miracle happen. That time Gourhari, being fully overwhelmed with the feelings of Shri Radhika, was singing and dancing and uttering her beloved's name. All the way to Brindaban with the hope of being at last able to see her darling Krishna, Prabhu ran, submerged in the deepest of ecstasy. The entire Universe, the Nature, the living and non-living entities, all danced in joy in tune with the sweet Krishna Nam uttered by Goursundar. Whoever witnessed that wonderful scene was the most fortunate and the most blessed. The dust of the earth itself being touched by Prabhu's lotus feet, as well by the feet of the dancing and singing elephants, tigers, peacocks, etc. was thus blessed and honoured.

Prabhu took bath thrice daily in the waters coming out of the natural springs. Whatever eatables were available in the forest Balabhadra cooked for Prabhu, and he ate those up with great relish. When the nights were a bit chilly, dried woods were gathered from the forest to make the campfire and Prabhu warmed himself up in that fire. At times Prabhu exclaimed, "Oh ! what unthinkable joy exists for those who travel to Brajadhama through the jungles and forests. Not an iota of difficulty exists for them. Through the lips of Sanatan, Lord

Shri Krishna himself taught me the lesson—that is why I am getting such joy while travelling through the forests to Braja.”

At times Prabhu embraced Balabhadra and praised him, saying that only because of him he could get such enjoyment in this journey to Brajadhama. Balabhadra shrank hearing this praise and said, ‘Prabhu, you are the Supreme Lord Himself who being compassionate has graced Balabhadra, who is nothing but a crow, and having agreed to eat the foods cooked by me and by taking the food from my hands, Prabhu, you have turned that small crow into Garuda, the mightiest of the birds.”



KASHIDHAM-PRAYAGDHAM-MADHUPURI

Traversing through the forests and jungles Prabhu finally reached Kashidham. At the Manikarnika Ghat Prabhu met Tapan Mishra. He also met Baidya Chandrasekhar. Prabhu stayed at Chandrasekhar's house but took his food at Tapan Mishra's place. He arrived at Prayag (near present-day Allahabad) and took his holy dip at the sacred confluence of Tribeni, where three rivers—Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati—have met together. The Saraswati river today cannot be seen, but it is said that this river is flowing still but underneath. At the Madhaba temple Prabhu made obeisances to the Bigrha

of Shri Madhaba. With a deep feeling of love Prabhu then jumped into the river Jamuna. Having stayed at Prayag for three days Prabhu then arrived at Mathura.

At Mathura, the place where Lord Krishna was born, Prabhu saw the Bigraha of Keshaba and prostrated before him. Observing the ecstatic feelings of Prabhu all assembled there were very much astonished. One Brahmin witnessing Mahaprabhu started dancing in joy. Prabhu called the Brahmin aside and enquired of him, 'From where did you acquire this Love—this Bliss?' The Brahmin replied that he was the disciple of Madhabendra Puri Goswami. As soon as Prabhu heard that, he touched the Brahmin's feet and showed respect to him. Prabhu also accepted a meal at that Brahmin's house one day.

At Madhupuri—now called Mathura, millions of people came to see Prabhu. Prabhu bathed at the Chabbish Ghat of the Jamuna river. He saw all the places of pilgrimage at Brajadham, such as Swayambhu Bishram, Dirgha Vishnu, Bhuteshwar, Gokarna, et cetera. Together with that Brahmin, of whom we have told earlier, Prabhu visited Madhuban, Talban, Kumudban, Bahulaban also.

On the road-side, seeing the herds of cows, Prabhu stood before them with a joyous mind. The cows came towards Prabhu and licked his body. Prabhu scratched the backs of the cows, and then they travelled along together. The cowherd had extreme difficulty to take back the cows home. The cows did not want to leave the company of Mahaprabhu.

Herds of deer came running hearing Prabhu singing Krishna Nam. Does and deer licked the body of Prabhu in deepest of affection. Cuckoos (কোকিল) and bhramars (ভ্রমর) sung in the fifth note seeing Prabhu. The peacocks and peahens danced. Seeing the blue-coloured necks of the peacocks Prabhu reminisced about Lord Krishna. In deep ecstasy Prabhu swooned and fell on the ground. Living and

non-living entities of Brindaban sang Lord Krishna's sweet name along with Lord Prabhu.

Prabhu embraced each and every tree and creeper. The birds like Shuk (শুক) and Sari (সারি) came flying and sat on Prabhu's hands. The Shuk bird always sings the praises and glories of his Lord Krishna, where as the Sari bird does the same exactly for her Lady Shri Radhika, and both these birds compete with each other to establish whose beloved is the better. Hearing the songs of the birds Prabhu was overwhelmed with joy. The whole day and night at Brajadham Prabhu remained deeply afflicted with "Prem". That he performed his daily rites and took food for sustenance of body were just out of habit and because of the demands made by the corporal body.

"Brindaban-Behari" Gourhari plunged himself into the deepest of ecstasies after coming to Brindaban. Not only that, his enjoyment and deepest appreciation, expressive of Radha-Krishna Prem, made others also perceive and enjoy a little of that eternal bliss, merely by looking at Prabhu.

Ananta (অনন্ত) who is possessed of thousands of faces and mouths, even if he too tried he would not be able to complete the descriptions of all the incidents of blissful experiences and the nature of joy that passed through Shri Gouranga Sundar during his stay at Brindaban.



RE-DISCOVERY OF SHRI RADHAKUNDA

All the Tirthas of Braja, particularly Radhakunda, Shyamkunda and many others whose description only remained in Shrimad Bhagabatam and other scriptures, were not physically available for us to see, those being apparently lost to the posterity. In his search for those lost Tirthas Gouranga Sundar roamed throughout Brajadham. He arrived at the Arit (ଅରିଟି) village of Brindaban and enquired of everybody where the Radhakunda and Shyamkunda were. No one could show him these sacred Kundas nor could they even locate where once those Kundas existed. Gourhari looked around. He saw two adjacent rice-fields. Rice had grown there and both the fields were filled with water. Prabhu started reciting the slokas in praise of Shri Radhakunda and Shri Shyamkunda. He then suddenly plunged into the waters of those two rice fields and took his bath with deep reverence. After his bath was over, he picked up some clay out of those rice fields and made Tilakas on his body. He also tied a bit of that clay at the end of his uttariya (ଉତ୍ତରୀୟ) and these then gave clear indications that Prabhu re-discovered the lost Radhakunda and Shyamakunda.

Subsequently Prabhu re-discovered many other lost Tirthas of Brajadham and also directed Shri Rupa Goswami and Shri Sanatan Goswami to reside always at Brindaban, to re-discover the lost Tirthas of the Brajadham and to write books on the Baishnab Shastras, which they did faithfully. Frankly speaking, all the places where Lord Krishna and Shri Radhika, Gopis and Brajabasis had their ethereal sports (Lila-Sthalies) in the Dwapara age at Brindaban, were all

found and identified by Mahaprabhu Shri Shri Gouranga Sundar for us. Because of him only, today all of us can visit those places and if the Lord so wishes we can then be immersed in the Braja-Ras (ब्रजरस) of those sacred places. In fact the real 'Tattwa' of Brindaban, the practice and worshipping the 'Ras' as propounded at Brindaban by Radha and Krishna, are all Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar's free and invaluable gift to us and for the posterity yet to come. If Mahaprabhu had not identified those places as mentioned in Shrimad Bhagabatam and other scriptures, those would then have remained just as names only for us. Some of us could have doubted whether those places really existed at all.

Mahaprabhu gave us back the BRAJA of the Dwapara Age.

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SHOWERING GRACE ON RUPA GOSWAMI AT PRAYAG

The news that Mahaprabhu was residing at Brindaban, spread quickly and people came running to have a glimpse of him. They started coming to see him, to talk to him, to touch him, to receive his grace. The crowd swelled. Balabhadra requested Mahaprabhu that they should rather now visit Prayag Dham to take the holy dip on the "Makara Sankranti" day. Prabhu agreed to it and proceeded to Prayag.

While they were on their way to Prayag, Prabhu met two fierel looking Pathan soldiers, and after having a discussion with them converted them to Baishnabism. These two Pathans became such staunch devotees of Lord Shri Krishna that people gave them the epithets of "Pathan Baishnab". Since the day they met Mahaprabhu these two Pathans had no other desire in their minds left except to think and talk about Mahaprabhu only.

Having arrived at Prayag and taking their holy dip in the Tribeni on the "Makara Sankranti" day Prabhu met Rupa Goswami. By then Rupa Goswami, previously known as Sakar Mallick, a Minister of Nawab Hossain Shah of Bengal, had given up his ministerial post, his domestic life and came to Prayag as was earlier directed by Mahaprabhu when on his second outing for going to Brajadham he met him at Ramakeli.

Mahaprabhu and Rupa met at Prayag beneath a tree. At the request of Rupa Mahaprabhu stayed at Prayag for ten days, and explained to Rupa the Rasa Tattwa (রস-তত্ত্ব) of Brindaban. He also imparted all his powers to Rupa so that Rupa could propagate the true Brindabani-Rasa-Keli-Barta for the posterities. This unique Rasa Tattwa of Brindaban had been lost to us and it was through Rupa Goswami, that Mahaprabhu ensured these priceless treasures to be gifted back to us again for our own liberation and salvation.

Mahaprabhu had selected these two brothers, Rupa and Sanatan, to establish firmly the philosophical base for the Gaudiya Baishnabism to sprout upon.

Having imparted his strength and power to Rupa Goswami, Mahaprabhu ordered Rupa to go to Brindaban, to reside there and to devote his entire time there to discover back the lost Tirthas of Brindaban of the Dwapara Age, and also to concentrate on writing books on Baishnaba Shastras. These instructions of Mahaprabhu were carried out to the letter by

Shri Rupa Goswami and, because of him as well as of Sanatan Goswami, today we are in the proud possession of the actual teachings and preachings of Mahaprabhu Shri Shri Gouranga Sundar. Gouranga Sundar did not leave behind any books or any writings of him except the eight slokas—the Sikshastakas (শিক্ষাষ্টক).



GOURHARI AT KASHIDHAM AGAIN

From Prayag the liberator Shri Gourhari again came back to Kashidham. He stayed at Chandrasekhar's house. One day in the morning Prabhu said to Chandrasekhar, "Go and fetch the Baishnab sitting at your house-door step." Chandrasekhar went, but could not see any Baishnab there and came back. Prabhu enquired of Chandrasekhar, "Did you not see any one there?" Chandrasekhar said, "Yes, but one Darbesh (a Muslim mendicant) only" Mahaprabhu said, "That person is the Baishnab, bring him to me."

Hearing that Mahaprabhu had asked him to be fetched to him, Sanatan (previous name Dabir Khas) entered the house with deep joy at his heart and prostrated before Prabhu's lotus feet. Prabhu lifted Sanatan up and embraced him close to his own chest. At the touch of Mahaprabhu, Sanatan got deeply ecstatic. Prabhu then made Sanatan sit by his side and patted Sanatan's back in affection. Sanatan pleaded

with Prabhu not to touch him. Sanatan had fled from Ramkeli renouncing Nawab Hossain Shah's Ministerial Service and everything he possessed, just to meet Mahaprabhu. This long way to Kashidham he had traversed through forests, jungles etc. to avoid being arrested by the Nawab's men and in the process endured and faced much hardship. Sanatan was afflicted with a severe skin disease and when Prabhu was embracing him touching his body, Sanatan felt guilty and was afraid that his impure body was thus soiling the pristinely pure body of Mahaprabhu. Little did Sanatan know that Mahaprabhu was thus imparting his strength and divine power to him, was purifying his body and soul and was curing Sanatan of his so-called diseases. But for the outsider who listened to Prabhu's reply it sounded like this—"I am touching you to purify myself, Sanatan. Krishna is most merciful. Lord Krishna has delivered you from the greatest of Hell. So by touching such a person who has been thus selected for receiving the grace of Lord Krishna I myself am honoured, having had the privilege of not only witnessing before my eyes such a Krishna-chosen person but also having the opportunity of touching him and embracing him.'

Sanatan replied, 'I do not know who Krishna is. But I know it is you, who has delivered me from my sins and who has removed my bondages.'



ETERNAL QUESTIONS (SANATAN PRASHNA)

Mahaprabhu then ordered Sanatan to get rid of his dirty clothes, to take a cleansing bath and get properly dressed up thereafter. Sanatan did as advised.

Sitting then at the lotus feet of Mahaprabhu, Sanatan put in three very pertinent and eternal questions to Gouranga Sundar.

Sanatan's questions were :

Who am I ?

Why am I being thus afflicted by three types of aggrievements, which are generated out of supernatural causes, elemental causes and theological causes ?

How shall I be able to get rid of these griefs ?

Sanatan's another half-question was that he did not have the intellect to ask proper questions regarding what were the real things that one should attain and how these could be achieved.

Sanatan implored Gourhari to clarify the doubts in his mind and to show him the real path to get rid of the 'TRITAP' (ত্রিতাপ).

These questions asked by Sanatan are the eternal questions (সনাতন-প্রশ্ন) raised by mankind from the hoary past. Every thinking person in this world of ours at one time or another, has either questioned others on these issues or himself had pondered over these in his mind seeking a satisfactory answer.

In the Upanishadas of India, the Sages, the Rishis, the Munis have more or less raised these basic questions, and according to their own self-realisations have answered these too. Yet the answers given by them have perhaps not been

able to satisfy the anguish at the heart of many a truth-seeker like Sanatan.

Thus these questions of Sanatan Goswami put to Mahaprabhu are also our own questions, the questions of a so-called modern man of this present-day world.

Mahaprabhu answered Sanatan's questions to Sanatan's fullest satisfaction. Let us see what were Mahaprabhu's own novel solutions to these eternal questions, so that we too being thus afflicted can get hold of the solutions to our such problems. Not only that, only by the fullest and most correct understanding and realisation of these would enable us to lead a really meaningful life in this modern world. We can then lead wonderful, joyous and happy life.

We are not quite sure whether the three above mentioned questions arise also in the minds of lower animals besides human beings. It is most probable that it does.

We all have our own interpretative answers to all of these questions or at least to one of the questions. To the question of "who am I" we try to arrive at an answer based on mere intellect or logic, yet all these answers differ. In fact I am not the name by which people call me, nor am I that person born at such and such place or belonging to such and such country, nation, race, caste or creed, then who am I ?

Mahaprabhu simply said, "I am the servant of Lord Krishna" and that answers all the questions about who I really am. "The identity of living beings is with the Tatastha Shakti of Krishna. Living entity or Moha is identical with the Supreme Lord. Yet it is also different. Krishna is infinite, unparalleled, complete, whole. But the living being or any other entity is small, bounded and part of a whole. Krishna is full Bliss,—concentrated Bliss. Living entity is only a very small part of that Bliss.

To the question why we are afflicted with all the "Tritaps"—why these aggrievement from three causes, Mahaprabhu's

answer : Because we have managed to FORGET Lord Krishna and our relationship with Him, that is why all these afflict us. As we have diverted our thoughts, efforts to acquire materialistic and destructible things and have forgotten Krishna, His illusory power—MAYA—is causing us grief so that we again go back to Krishna.

How can these afflictions be then remedied ? Mahaprabhu advised that as soon as our mind blossoms forth either by the Kripa of a Sadhu, or by reading scriptures, or by the grace of a real Guru and progresses then towards Krishna-Consciousness, from that precise moment our miseries and afflictions start getting dispelled. So that we do not entirely forget the Supreme Lord, who having created us Himself entered our hearts and resides there constantly and from there as 'Bibek' or Conscience reminds us from time to time of as soon as we deviate from the true path. It is the Absolute Lord who as Sadhu, as Scriptures, as Guru, as Keeper of our conscience lets us know who I am, and what is to be done to achieve the Lord and appears before us as GURU in person to guide us to the path of achieving Him.

It is not correct that mere physical illness is our cause of misery or grief. Neither is it due to some imagined mental imbalances, nor does it arise out of our associations and the created actions of our family and other people. Just because we have purposely denied our "servant-master relationship" with the Lord Almighty, our entire work and thinking and actions must always be oriented for providing pleasure and satisfaction to Lord Krishna only, and not to "self", and when we always think about Him while we are awake, while we are travelling, while we are sleeping even, in other words when we know nothing else in this world but only Krishna, then and then only all our miseries, all our grief, all our afflictions, all our poverty would vanish as if by magic.

Relationship, Title and Need are the three Tattwas spoken

of in the Vedas. In all the scriptures Krishna is the relation. Bhakti helps to achieve Krishna. And the final aim—the achievement, fulfilment is only after getting Krishna. Love for Krishna is the fifth PURUSARTHA for all living beings.

Thus having taught the fundamental truth of self, God and ways and means to achieve God, Prabhu Gouranga Sundar then transferred certain of his own powers to Sanatan Goswami and directed him to proceed to Brindaban, where Sanatan was to write books as well as to re-discover the lost Tirthas of Krishna's Brindaban.



DELIVERANCE OF SANNYASIS

Kashidham is famous as a seat of learning—intellectual learnig. Kashi was the main centre then of all the Sannyasis belonging to or affiliated to the “Monism” as preached by Sankaracharya. Amongst such Sannyasis Prakashananda Saraswati was the most scholarly and reputed of the Jnanis (scholar) amongst the Vedantists. When Prabhu was staying at Kashidham and people came and talked eulogising Prabhu, whether be that in praise of his exquisite beauty, or vast knowledge, or his scholarly discourses, or his melodious singing, Prakashananda ridiculed them and with veiled taunt used to say, “Yes, I have heard that a disciple of Keshab Bharati has arrived who is very emotional. He is called

Chaitanya and he roams about with a few foolish followers who just dance and sing from village to village. The young Sannyasi also seems to possess certain-mesmeric power, which attracts people and compels them to declare him even as God ! That the greatest scholar and Vedantist Pandit Basudeb Sarbhauma of Puri Dham has also been brought under the magic spell of this 'Chaitanya' I have heard it, too. In fact this Chaitanya chap is a Sannyasi by name only but he is really an imposter. He would not be able to cast his magic spell in Kashidham, the seat of True Knowledge the Pithasthan of the Jnanis, of the true Vedantists."

Prakashananda's utterances were relayed back to Mahaprabhu. He just smiled and said, "If what I have to say cannot be sold to these people here in Kashidham, then I would distribute this Truth free to all."

One day a Brahmin came and requested Mahaprabhu to accept 'Bhandara' at his house, as he had also invited all the other sannyasis of Kashi to his house to accept Bhandara on that day. Mahaprabhu kindly accepted this Brahmin's invitation.

Prabhu went to that Brahmin's house on the appointed day and after tendering his respects to all the assembled Sannyasis, washed his dusty feet and hands and then sat down at the wash-place itself. After Prabhu sat down there, all the assembled Sannyasis suddenly visualised powerful rays of millions of sun emanating from the body of Mahaprabhu. Immediately they realised that this young Sannyasi was not what they had earlier thought about him. On behalf of all the assembled Sannyasis Prakashananda himself approached Mahaprabhu and requested him to leave the soiled place and to take his seat with the other Sannyasis. Mahaprabhu replied that as the Sannyasi Sampradaya he belonged to was not held at all in reverence by the other Sannyasi Sampradayas that was why he was sitting there. Prakashananda led Prabhu holding his

hands amongst the other Sannyasis and made him sit there in their midst.

Prakashananda then politely asked Prabhu, "You are called Shri Krishna Chaitanya. You are the disciple of Keshab Bharati. You are also a Sannyasi, but instead of mixing with us, you just sing and dance. Why so? We have seen the lustre emanating from your body and have also seen your honey-gold complexion and beauty and you appear to us as if Lord Narayan himself has graced you. Then why do you not study the Vedantas?"

Shri Gouranga Sundar gave an angelic smile and replied, "Knowing me to be an idiot my Guru advised me that I am not yet fit enough to study the Vedantas. He ordered me to chant Krishna name only. In this Kalijuga, Krishna name chanting is the only way of salvation. I do what I have been bidden by my Guru. I do these not of my own free will. When I take the name of Krishna and utter his name with my tongue, that Krishna name forces me to dance vigorously and to sing His name more loudly. I myself thought that I must be turning insane and enquired of my Gurudeb why these peculiar things were happening to me. My Gurudeb told me that I have at last achieved the fifth Purusartha, the "Prem". As I have complete faith in my Gurudeb's words I therefore sing and chant Krishna name all the time. I believe that the bliss that is possible to be achieved by uttering the sanctified name of Krishna is incomparable. Even the so called joy of having attained Brahma (Brahmananda, ব্রহ্মানন্দ) when compared to Krishnaprem prapti (কৃষ্ণ প্রেম প্রাপ্তি) is like the light emitted by a 'fire fly'."

CRITICISM OF SHANKARA-BHASYA

Prakashananda and other Sannyasis were much moved to hear Prabhu's explanations. They all agreed to what Mahaprabhu told them. They themselves said that the summum bonum in life is to achieve Krishna Prem. "But this does not explain away your not taking part in listening to recitations of the Vedantas" they said. Prabhu also agreed with them that God's words are the Sutras of Vedantas, yet Sankaracharya, whom they all followed, did not explain the true meaning of the Vadanta Sutras. Each and every word in the sacred scriptures is to be understood on the direct meaning such words convey and not on their imaginary, secondary interpretative explanations. Sankaracharya, either as directed by God Himself or for certain reasons best known to God, purposely deviated from the true connotations and explained us the secondary, imaginative connotations of these Sutras or he erred himself. However the truth is as follows :

"Brahma is Whole, Brahma is Infinite, Brahma possesses everything. Brahma has form. He is formless also. Brahma has neither form nor is He formless. Brahma is full of concentrated bliss and spirit. The body of Brahma and of all His Parishadas that we see are CHIDAKAR. He is CHINMOY—His body is not PRAKRITAJA. Being the Creator and having created this Universe out of Him He is again not at all involved in these created things. If Brahma is TRUTH, is REAL, then how could His creation be Illusion, Maya, Unreal ?"

"All the Sutras of the Vedantas are to be taken as they are. Their primary meanings are the real ones and not the secondary

meanings. Veda Vyasa himself preferred and believed in the ultimate evolution. But Sankaracharya has hidden that and interpreted Vyasa's own Sutras on the basis of Maya-Illusion-Monism. That Brahma Himself evolves does not make Brahma an aberration. Brahma retains the control and being the Creator creates. The power that enables Brahma to create out of Himself and yet does not involve Brahma into the created things, does not bind Him up, does not take away His infinitism. This UNIQUENESS was not at all realised by the Monists—by the people who want Brahma to be believed as Formless. In this entire creation of Brahma there exists no illusion, all are ultimate. Brahma evolves yet remains in full control. To consider or equate a spark of fire as the same and identical with the fire itself is wrong. Similarly to theorise that living entities and Brahma are identical is the highest of follies. AHAM BRAHMASMI—this Sutra of the Vedas does not really mean I am Brahma, but I am nearing Him—I shall achieve Him. Even if one achieves Brahma, he cannot be Brahma Himself. The living entities are the manifestations of one particular power of Brahma. It is His "Tatastha Shakti". Therefore trying to equate a part as being same and identical with the whole would be the greatest of sins, if this is imposed upon Brahma by imaginary interpretations as has been done by others."

'The concentrated devotion for Krishna is pristine Love, is the PREM. This unselfish pristine 'Prem' is the fifth Purusartha. Krishna can be realised, can be appreciated only through this 'Prem' and by nothing else. Krishna is attracted by Bhakti. Bhakti gives the pleasure of achieving Krishna. NAM-SANKIRTAN thus arouses that deep feeling of Krishna-realisation, Krishna-appreciation and Krishna-consciousness.

"That is why perhaps when my tongue utters Krishna name as has been directed to me by my Gurudeb, "Krishna-Love" touches me and makes me dance and sing His name more

and more. It gives me joy—puts me into ecstasy, which cannot be achieved by anything else—by any other means and ways.” Thus spoke Shri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to all the Vedantists and Sannyasis at Kashidham.

The Sannyasis accepted Prabhu’s teachings and uttered Krishna name. It was thus the wonder of wonders that at Kashidham the Vedantist Sannyasis started discourses on Shrimad Bhagabatam instead of talking on Vedantas. Prabhu made all the people of Kashidham mad with the joy of Krishna Nam-Sankirtan.

The people of Kashidham were thus liberated and shown the true path of Krishna-Consciousness by Mahaprabhu. Having done so, suddenly one night Prabhu, without telling any of his companions, started for Nilachal Puridham alone. Tapan Mishra, Raghunath, one Maharastrian Brahmin, Chandrasekhar, Paramananda Puri, these five persons came to know about Prabhu’s sudden departure and ran to be with him on his journey to Puridham, but Prabhu asked all of them to return.

Prabhu again directed Sanatan to propagate the Radha-Krishna Lila Tattwa by writing books about those and particularly to stay at Brindaban and to give shelter and render hospitality to the poorest of his poorest devotees whoever would reach Brindaban.



BRAJABAS OF SUBUDDHI ROY

Before Hossain Shah became the Nawab of Bengal (Gauda Desh) Subuddhi Roy was the king of Gauda. Syed Hossain Shah was Subuddhi Roy's employee. Once Roy had entrusted Hossain to supervise the work of the digging of a lake for the people's use. Hossain did not carry out the work honestly. He perhaps defalcated some money too. For having failed in his duty as a public servant Subuddhi Roy punished Hossain Shah publicly. Hossain was whipped.

As luck would have it, it was the same Hossain Shah who ultimately became the Ruler of Bengal, replacing Subuddhi Roy. Yet Hossain was very respectful to Subuddhi Roy, though Roy was no longer the king. One day Hossain's wife saw deep scars on the back of Hossain Shah and enquired how these happened. Hossain Shah, being much pressed by his wife, had to tell the earlier incident of his being whipped at the orders of the former king Subuddhi Roy. The Begum of Nawab Hossain Shah, hearing this, flew into a rage and demanded immediate beheading of Subuddhi Roy.

Hossain Shah pleaded with his wife for the life of his erstwhile king Subuddhi Roy and said that if instead Subuddhi Roy was converted to a Muslim that in reality would be a greater punishment than disposing his life. Being a conservative and staunch Hindu, Subuddhi Roy was forced to drink a particular water, for which he was ex-communicated from the fold of the then conservative obscurantist Hindu Society.

Roy went to Kashidham and enquired of the best of the Pundits there as to what remedy existed for him to that unwilful sin on his part. All the Kashi-Pundits ruled that

Subuddhi Roy had no alternative left but to die a slow death by taking boiling ghee (clarified butter) !

Naturally Subuddhi Roy did not like to die. As Mahaprabhu happened to be at Kashidham at that precise moment when Subuddhi Roy went to get the rulings of the Pundits of Kashidham, Roy took the chance and enquired of Prabhu what he should do. Subuddhi Roy narrated Prabhu the entire episode leading to the present state of his condition.

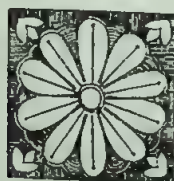
Prabhu at once said, "Why should you die eating boiling ghee ? Do instead what I tell you. You proceed to Brindaban from here and stay there. You utter and chant Krishna Nam-Sankirtan daily, incessantly. This NAM would absolve you of all your sins, all your failings and at the same time this Krishna Nam would help you achieve the lotus-feet of Lord Krishna." The ex-king of the Gauda Desh, Subuddhi Roy, abided whole-heartedly by what Mahaprabhu ordered him and went to Brindaban and became a Brajabasi since then and faithfully carried out what he was instructed to perform and was thus liberated.

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BACK TO NILACHAL

Having stayed at Kashidham for about five days Prabhu started for Nilachal Puri Dham. Again Balabhadra, who was his only companion to Brindaban when Prabhu had started from Nilachal, was his only companion again on this return journey. They travelled through jungles and forests to Puri.

Having reached Atharo Nala (অঠারো নাল) Prabhu sent Balabhadra in advance to give his devotees at Puri the news of his return. All the devotees having been thus informed came up to Narendera Sarovar to receive Mahaprabhu there. Together with all his devotees Mahaprabhu reached Puri, and went straight to Puri Temple to see Lord Jagannath. He then came and resided at Kashi Mishra's house at Puri.



ARRIVAL OF THE GAUDIYA DEVOTEES

Through Kalakrishna Das, the news of Mahaprabhu's return to Puri from his journey to Brindaban, was sent to Nadia by Swarup Damodar. Two hundred devotees from the Gauda Desha started for Puridham hearing of Prabhu's return. Shibananda Sen of Kulin-Gram took the entire charge of this large retinue. At those times wars often flared up between respective kings and as the region between Gauda Desh to Puridham was under the control of different kings and Nawabs, the journey was not safe. Toll gates existed at different places and over-enthusiast toll-keepers fleeced the pilgrims, demanding exorbitant rates of customs and other taxes for their respective rulers before allowing them to cross over. All these harassments and troubles that were in store for this large retinue of two hundred Gaudiya devotees proceeding to Puridham from Nadia and surrounding areas were set at rest by Shibananda Sen alone.

A dog also accompanied them. This dog had a strange habit. It did not take any food if that was not first offered to God. The dog took only Prasadam. At one particular toll gate it took considerable trouble and time to let these devotees through and Shibananda later found that as the person in charge had forgotten to give the dog his Prasadam the dog was just seen nowhere. They all searched for the dog but could not locate it. All were sad at this incident, but had to trudge onwards.

After the Bathing Festival (Snan Jatra) of Lord Jagannath the daily DARSHAN allowed to pilgrims is stopped for a few days. Gour Sundar therefore had gone to Alalnath for those

few days. Having heard that Gaudiya devotees had come, Gour Sundar returned hurriedly to Puri. The devotees arrived singing { Nam Sankirtan from Atharo Nala itself. The king of Puri, Maharaj Pratap Rudra, witnessed the scene from his palace roof top. Pundit Sarbabhauma was also with the king on the palace roof top. Gopinath Acharya was also present. Gopinath pointed out the devotees to Raja Pratap Rudra one by one.

Prabhu Gouranga Sundar had sent Swarup-Damodar and Gobinda Das, his two representatives, with garlands, sandal paste and other usual things to receive the honoured, respected Baishnab devotees of Gaudiya Desh.

Adwaita Acharya was garlanded by both Swarup Damodar and Gobinda Das. Raja Pratap had not seen Adwaita Acharya previously. Raja enquired who that "Jyotirmoy" person was who was there garlanded by two of Gourhari's devotees simultaneously. Gopinath told Pratap Rudra that he was Adwaita Acharya. It was he who made the descent of Gouranga Sundar on this earth possible. Seeing the miseries of all the people it was Adwaita Acharya who prayed and cried to the Supreme Lord daily and requested Him to descend on the earth for the deliverance of the people. Even Gouranga Sundar himself revered and respected Adwaita Acharya.

Pratap Rudra said that prior to that he did not witness such effulgence emanating out of the body of any human being. He felt honoured and blessed having seen Adwaita Acharya—the Thakur-ana Thakur (ঠাকুর-আনা ঠাকুর)

Gopinath then pointed out Shribas, Gadadhar, Shibananda, Murari, Bakreshwar and others to Raja Pratap Rudra

Seeing the divine dancing, and hearing Kirtan and chanting of Hari Nam, Raja opined that the sort of dancing, singing and Hari-Dhwani were not seen or heard by him before.

Gopinath replied, "Maharaj, all your words are true—**VERY TRUE.**"

This NAM-SANKIRTAN is the UNIQUE creation of Shri Krishna Chaitanya. Such love, such sweetness, such depth of realisation, such ecstasy never existed before in the Nam-Sankirtan. This Nam-Sankirtan being propagated was created specifically in this fashion by Lord Gouranga Sundar himself. He injected into it his entire God-realisation.

The devotees of Nilachal at last met the devotees of Gauda Desh and all of them were plunged into the Krishna Katha and Gour Katha (কৃষ্ণ-কথা এবং গৌর-কথা) .

Mahaprabhu had bidden every one that one must always worship Krishna only, shall only think of Krishna and talk about Krishna only and about nothing else : Bhaja Krishna, Kaho Krishna, Laho Krishner Name Re. (ভজ কৃষ্ণ, কহ কৃষ্ণ, লহ কৃষ্ণের নাম রে) In this fashion and only with such a simple tool the minds of the people were made conscious of Lord Shri Krishna and thereby universal love and brotherhood was made possible to be within everyone's reach. For this one did not need to BELONG to any particular race, creed, colour, caste or faith, but to have only the WILL TO LOVE.



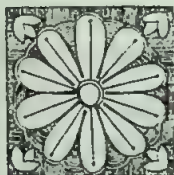
THE DOG THAT WAS BLESSED

At long last the large retinue of the Gaudiya devotees arrived at Puridham. Shibananda Sen met Shri Gouranga Prabhu. Mahaprabhu enthusiastically clasped him into his bosom and made him sit by his side. Shibananda was surprised to see that dog also sitting by Mahaprabhu's side. It

was that same dog who had vanished from that toll gate when it was not given food at the appointed hour of the day. We have told about that incident earlier.

Mahaprabhu distributed grated coconut to the dog. The dog ate it up and to everyone's astonishment immediately uttered Krishna's name. It was so distinctly, clearly and loudly uttered that no one could believe their eyes or ears. It was a miracle. Shibananda felt repentant and prostrating himself before this dog he begged to be excused for their combined failure to carry out their duties and obligations to him. After some time, the dog vanished as if by magic, and since then was never seen again.

Because of Mahaprabhu's immense 'Kripa', the dog acquired his 'Siddha'-body (সিদ্ধদেহ) and went straight to 'Baikuntha'—the eternal abode of Lord Narayana. The dog was thus blessed by Mahaprabhu and obtained his "PARAM-GATI" (পরম-গতি) with such an apparent ease.



RUPA COMPOSED APPROPRIATE SLOKA

Prabhu always looked intensely at the moon-face of Lord Jagannath whenever he sang and danced along with his devotees in front of Lord Jagannath's chariot during the Car Festival. Prabhu recited one particular sloka, which when

literally translated sounded to uninitiated ears rather highly erotic. The essence of the sloka as recited by Prabhu was that a wife told her husband about her dissatisfaction at not being able to enjoy the same intense feeling of love on meeting him after their marriage as compared to the pleasures and joy she used to enjoy when, during their pre-marital days, they used to meet alone in the cane-bush by the side of the Rebati river. Whoever heard Prabhu reciting this rather erotic sloka was perplexed and was not clear as to its real meaning. On one particular occasion Shri Rupa Goswami happened to be present, when Prabhu again recited that sloka, and continued gazing intently at Shri Jagannath.

Immediately Rupa Goswami composed a sloka himself and recited that before Mahaprabhu. Rupa's sloka read like this :—

“Priyah Sohailyang Krishnah Sahachari Kurukshetra Milita
 Stathaham Sa Radha Tadidamub. ayoh Sangamsukham
 Tathyapanta Khelan Madhura Murali Pancham Juse
 Mano Me Kalindi Pulin Bipinaya Sprihayati.”

“প্রিয়ঃ সোহায়ং কৃষ্ণঃ সহচরি কুরুক্ষেত্র মিলিত
 স্তথাহং সা রাদ্বা তদিদমুভয়োঃ সঙ্গম স্থখম্
 তথ্যাপন্তঃ খেলনধুর মুরলী পঞ্চম জুষে
 মনো মে কালিন্দী পুলিন বিপিনায় স্পৃহয়াতি ।”

Hearing this sloka composed by Rupa, Prabhu became very excited. He was also overjoyed to hear it. Prabhu slapped Rupa on his back and exclaimed, “Rupa, how possibly could you read my mind ?” Rupa's sloka cited above meant that the feeling Mahaprabhu got by gazing at Lord Jagannath's face during the Car Festival was identical with what Shri Radhika felt when after her long separation she at long last met her beloved Krishna at Prabhas after the battle of Kurukshetra. Krishna was in his kingly attire and was surrounded by warhorses, elephants and crowds of people, all entirely alien

to her. Shri Radhika did not derive the same pleasure and joy which she used to get when they used to meet earlier in the Kunjas (कूट) of Brindaban when Krishna was in his usual cowherd boy's dress only.



GOUR TATTWA AS INDICATED IN SLOKAS OF SRI RUPA GOSWAMI

Rupa Goswami was writing a drama. At Mahaprabhu's directive he was re-writing one existing book into two separate books. These two books composed by Rupa Goswami are the BIDAGDHA MADHAVA and LALITA MADHAVA. Gour Sundar himself was sitting along with other Rasik devotees. Ray Ramananda enquired of Rupa as to what he had written in praise of ISTADEVA at the beginning of the book Bidagdha Madhava. Rupa hesitated to answer, as Prabhu was sitting there. The reasons for Rupa's hesitation was that Rupa in his 'Ista-Bandana' had praised Prabhu Gournga Sundar himself. Prabhu was not of course aware of that ; so he said to Rupa, "Rupa, why are you hesitating to read ? To be asked by and being able to read one's book before the Baishnabas is a great honour one can dream of." Despite these utterings of Prabhu, Rupa Goswami remained silent as before. Swarup Damodar then took the manuscript from the hands of Rupa and read out what Rupa had written. It ran as follows :

Anarpitacharim Chirat Karunayabatirna Kalau
Samarpayitumunnata-ujjala Rasam Swabhakti-shriam.

Harih-purata-sundara-dyuti Kadamba Sandipitah
Sada Hriday Kandare Sphuratu bah Sachinandanah.

অনপিতচরীং চিরাং করুণয়াবতীর্ণ কলৌ

সমর্পয়িতুমুরতোজ্জলরসাং স্বভক্তিপ্রিয়াম্

হরিঃ পুরতত্ত্বন্দরহ্রীতি কদম্ব সন্দীপিতঃ

সদা হৃদয় কন্দরে স্পুর্ভুত বঃ শচীনন্দনঃ ।

Hearing this sloka of Rupa, all the devotees exclaimed in sheer joy and appreciation. Gour Sundar cleverly commented that "The praise of the Ista Deva is rather too much."

Prabhu then asked all the assembled devotees to bless Rupa so that he could describe the Braja-Rasa Tattwa.

The devotees replied, "When you yourself have blessed Rupa so much, we need do nothing more for him."



PRADYUMNA MISHRA

Pradyumna Mishra was much devoted to Lord Krishna and he requested Gouranga Deb to tell him about Krishna. Mahaprabhu advised Pradyumna to go to Ray Ramananda instead, as he was the fittest person to speak on Krishna. According to Prabhu Gouranga Sundar, if one desired for Krishna-katha (কৃষ্ণ-কথা) one should better hear the same straight from the mouth of Ray Ramananda.

Pradyumna went as directed by Prabhu, but being told by

Ray's attendants that their master was busy teaching young 'Dev-Dasis' on singing and dancing, he returned immediately. That Ray Ramananda was in the company of young "Dev-Dasis" engendered a rather repulsive feeling in Pradyumna. He came back and told Mahaprabhu about it. Mahaprabhu directed Pradyumna to go again to Ramananda, because he had made a great mistake by judging Ray Ramananda's character on this piece of news only. Prabhu explained to Pradyumna that continuous listening to Shrimad Bhagabatam and discussing Bhagabatam, had turned Ramananda's corporal body into an ethereal one. In fact no one can equal him on the aspect of strength of character, continence and purity of thoughts. A person who is no longer influenced by so-called sex, and has gone beyond this, he only is capable of expounding and is also fit to listen to the most sacred Rasa-Lila (रास लीला) of Shri Radha-Krishna and the Gopis. Constant ponderings over this sacred Ras-Lila transforms one's corporal body and mind to an ethereal stuff.

Pradyumna Mishra realised his mistake and went back to Ramananda's place. Ramananda explained to Pradyumna the mystic Krishna Lila, its real inherent meaning and the sweetness of Krishna-Lila Tattwa. So engrossed while was he in talking on Krishna that he was not even aware of the passing away of time and that the day had rolled into evening. Both the speaker and the listener of 'Krishna-Katha' were immersed in deep ecstasy and were not aware of things happening outside and around them.

The lifelong desire of Pradyumna Mishra to listen to real Krishna-Katha was thus fulfilled by Mahaprabhu's kripa.

Pradyumna then departed from Ray Ramananda's house, a most satisfied and deeply contented person.

A DRAMA WRITTEN BY A BENGALI BRAHMIN

A Bengali Brahmin wrote a drama on the life of Mahaprabhu, which he read before Prabhu's devotees. All of them appreciated the drama and desired that it be read before Prabhu also. Being requested Prabhu said, "Let Swarup first listen to it. If he considers it worth listening to, then only shall I hear it gladly".

The 'Nandi-Sloka' (নন্দী-শ্লোক), as written by the Brahmin at the beginning of his drama, was rather nicely worded and well-composed. The sloka was in praise of both Lord Jagannath and Gouranga Sundar. The Brahmin had stated that because of Shri Gouranga Sundar Lord Jagannath had now become his real self. He compared Lord Jagannath as only the body of Supreme Lord and Shri Gourangasundar as His soul. The Bipra in his praise of Gourhari said that Gourhari was imparting true knowledge to the uninitiated and that all our well-being was being better taken care of by Shri Gourhari.

Except for Swarupa, others highly praised this Sloka. Swarup demanded of the Bipra to elaborate his sloka in detail. The Bipra explained, "The body of Brahma is the beautiful Bigrha of Lord Jagannath, but His soul is Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. To deliver consciousness to human beings the Supreme Lord had descended on earth as Shri Krishna Chaitanya and the Daru Brahma Jagannath had now got back His soul in Shri Chaitanya and is now complete. Let them deliver us."

Hearing Bipra's explanations of his own slokas, Swarup-Damodar then remarked, "Your slokas are not only imperfect but also incorrect factually. Hearing your sloka it is at

once clear that you have no faith in either of the two Lords nor do you believe in any of these Lords."

"Lord Jagannath is the Brahma Himself and is full consciousness, full bliss yet you have described him as body only—an inanimate object, which He is not. Again Lord Shri Krishna Chaitanya himself is BHAGABAN in possession of all the six splendours (ষড়-ঐশ্বর্য), but you have compared him with the corporal soul of the 'Monads'. Thus not acknowledging the true self of both Lord Jagannath and Lord Shri Gouranga—you have sinned before both these Lords."

"You have also committed another unpardonable offence. Brahma is the embodiment of ALL and there exists no separate existence of body and soul in Brahma. Body and soul are co-existent. Not only that, no distinctions or differences exist in the Supreme Lord. In your slokas you have depicted one Lord as mere body and the other Lord as mere soul, which is not true!!"

Swarup then himself commented that if instead of the interpretations as given now by the Bipra the sloka was interpreted in a different way then some good could be made out of this sloka. Swarup's interpretation was this :—

"Jagannath is like the soul of Krishna. But at present Lord Jagannath has manifested Himself as DARU BRAHMA only, but He is identical with Lord Krishna all the time. Again Lord Krishna Himself for the emancipation of humanity has divided Himself into two forms, but remaining as one 'Tattwa' and is now manifested as moving Brahma. Lord Jagannath in the 'Daru Brahma' manifestation is the 'not-moving' form of the Lord and Gour Sundar has appeared as His incarnate in moving form. If the sloka is interpreted in this way only then this sloka would not be imperfect."

KRIPA TO RAGHUNATH DAS

Raghunath Das was the son of Zamindar Gobardhan Das of Saptagram. Hearing about Gouranga Sundar Raghunath visited Shantipur and met Mahaprabhu there and expressed to him his desire to renounce the domestic life. Gourhari at once directed him to go back home and that too in a rather strong language. Prabhu said to Raghunath that he should rather lead family life and enjoy it without really being deeply involved in it. Unless one wants true renunciation one should not pose for this to please the crowd.

Raghunath went back home. His parents got him married. Raghunath devoted his time and energy to become a family man. But that was an outward show. His inner mind was eager for of renunciation of the domestic life. One night he fled from the house, but was located and brought back home by his father. Since then Raghunath was always kept under close watch, so that he could not flee.

Merciful Netai Chand had come to Panihati. Hearing this Raghunath, like a piece of iron attracted by a magnet was drawn to Panihati. Prior to this Raghunath had never met Netai Chand. This was the first time he saw Nityananda Prabhu. Nityananda sat beneath a tree near the Ganga on a slightly raised platform, surrounded by his innumerable devotees. Divine glow of mid-day sun was emanating from Netai Chand's body. Raghunath witnessing this was astonished and prostrated on the ground to show his respect. Raghunath was quite far off, but sportive and merciful Netai Chand called Raghunath near him and placed his own lotus feet on the head of

Raghunath. Then he addressed Raghunath very sweetly and complained why Raghunath did not come and see him often. Then Netai Chand demanded of him that his devotees be fed that day with Dadhi-Chira-Curd and flattened rice.

Raghunath was much moved that Netai Chand was demanding of him such services and that too in what a sweet tone. The devotees were all fed nicely. Nityananda Prabhu by his own meditative power brought 'Gora Chand' in spirit in that Dadhi-Chira-Mahotsav, and having thus fed Mahaprabhu, gave Mahaprabhu's Prasad to Raghunath and said, "Shri Chaitanya Prabhu has eaten this. You eat this up now and this would liberate you of your bondage."

Raghunath prayed prostrating himself at the lotus feet of Shri Netai Chand to show him the way to get a place at the lotus feet of Shri Gouranga Sundar. He told Nityananda Prabhu that many times had he fled from his house, but his parents somehow got to know about this and were able to trace him and bring him back home by force. Raghunath told Nityananda Prabhu that without his grace it would be impossible for him to be with Gouranga Mahaprabhu.

Hearing this Nityananda Prabhu placed his lotus feet upon Raghunath's head and declared, "From to-day all your ties and bondages are removed. Your beloved Gourhari would soon accept you as his most dear servant. He would hand you over to Swarup Damodar. And all this would happen very soon."

Raghunath came back home from Panihati. At night when he was asleep at the Chandimandap he was closely guarded, so that he could not flee. But in the small hours of dawn when everyone was in the deepest of slumber, Raghunath silently got up and silently waking up the family priest Jadunath Acharya, fled from home. After getting away safely he sent back the family priest and went on alone. He left the main roads and took side-roads and traversed a distance of more than 45 kilometres in a day.

Next day he changed direction from his eastward journey towards south. Having crossed Chatra-bhog he reached Nilachal Puridham in twelve days.

On his way to Puri Raghunath was almost without food for three days. As his entire mind and thoughts were always on the lotus feet of this Chaitanya, he did not feel any hunger.

The 'abode of mercy and compassion' was sitting surrounded by his devotees like Swarup Damodar Gobinda Das and others. Precisely then Raghunath appeared on the scene. He had come all the way from Saptagram to Puridham to be accepted by Lord Gourhari as his servant. Seeing Raghunath, Mahaprabhu with deep affection and love beckoned him to come near him. Raghunath came and prostrated himself before the Lord's lotus-feet. Gourhari clasped Raghunath in his bosom and introduced him to his other devotees. Then addressing Swarup Damodar Gourhari said, "I have three Raghunaths. This Raghunath from today would be known as Swarup's Raghunath. Swarup, you accept him as your son, as your servant."

Govinda Das brought the remnants of the food that were still left on the dishes after Gourhari's meal was over. Raghunath ate. For five days Raghunath's meals consisted of only the left-overs and remnants of Mahaprabhu Goursundar's meals. After five days Raghunath of his own accord started standing near the Maingate of Lord Jagannath's Temple, and ate whatever anyone gave him to eat.

The news that Raghunath begged for his food standing at the Temple gate reached the ears of Mahaprabhu. Gouranga Sundar was very pleased hearing this and declared, "It is so nice to hear that Raghunath is now following the path of a renouncer of domestic life and its pleasures. What he is doing is the duty of a real Bairagi (বৈরাগী). A Bairagi must devote entire time available to him, chanting and singing in praise of Lord Hari and should sustain his corporal body by

eating whatever he could get by begging from people and that too whatever they gave and of their own volition.”

One day Raghunath sat at the feet of Gour Sundar and requested him to advise him what his real duties should be. Raghunath enquired of Mahaprabhu to advice him about his SADHYA and SADHAN (সাধ্য এবং সাধন). Mahaprabhu replied, “These would be duly explained and elaborated upon by Swarup Damodar to Raghunath. But I would tell you a few words also. You should never listen to vulgar talks nor should you yourself talk vulgar, nor should you crave for delicious foods and nice clothes. You should not crave for your own praise or recognition but must always pay due respect to others. You should think about Krishna and always chant his name. And in your mind station yourself at Brajadham and stay there mentally serving Radha and Krishna all the time.

Gramya Katha Na Sunibe ; Gramya Katha Na Kahibe
Bhalo Na Khaibe , Aar Bhalo Na Paribe.

Amani Manada ; Krishna Nam Sada Labe,
Braje Radha-Krishna Seba Manase Koribe.”

[গ্রাম্য কথা না শুনিবে ; গ্রাম্য কথা না কহিবে,

ভাল না খাইবে ; আর ভাল না পরিবে ।

অমানী মানদ ; কৃষ্ণ নাম সদা লবে,

ব্রজে রাধা-কৃষ্ণ সেবা মানসে করিবে ।]

Raghuuath's father finally learnt about Raghunath's arrival at Puridham. To take care of his son's livelihood and up-keep he sent two hundred Tankas. Raghunath did not touch the money sent by his father, and returned it. After this, Raghunath stopped standing at the Temple's main gate. Instead he now went to SATRAS—where food is distributed free to all—and took his meals there. Mahaprabhu heard this and said, “Raghunath having stopped begging for food standing at the Temple's main gate has done the correct thing now. The previous act was almost like prostituting oneself.”

Going to the 'Satras' (সত্র) for food was also stopped by

Raghunath later. The 'prasadam' that the shopkeepers disposed of, those having become stale or rotten, into the drain, was picked up by Raghunath and eaten up. The Prasadam was so rotten that even the cows refused eating it. What Raghunath was doing came to the knowledge of Swarup Damodar to whom Mahaprabhu had handed over Raghunath. Swarup begged of Raghunath to be given a little of that 'Amrita' (अमृत) to him too, and accused Raghunath for not sharing that with others ! Finally, Gouranga Sundar himself snatched a mouthful out of Raghunath's hand and ate that rotten food with real relish. Gour Sundar told Raghunath then, "Raghunath, you yourself eat this delicious prasadam of Lord Jagannath daily but you do not share that with me. Pray why ?" Raghunath's humility and his unparalleled 'Bairagya' (बैराग्य) had given immense pleasure to Mahaprabhu.

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GOBARDHAN SHILA AND GARLAND

From Brindaban Sankarananda Saraswati brought a piece of stone from the Gobardhan mountain, and one garland made of the special fine red and black seeds. These were usually known as Gobardhan Shila and Gunja garland (ଗୋବର୍ଦ୍ଧନ ଶିଳା ଓ ଗୁଞ୍ଜା ମାଳା). These he gave to Mahaprabhu after arriving

at Puri. Mahaprabhu was always immersed in his contemplation of Brajadham, Shri Krishna and the Braja Lila-s. Prabhu wore that Gunja Mala (গুঞ্জা মালা) often when he was pondering over Brindaban Dham. The Gobardhan Shila Prabhu placed at times upon his head, at times on his eyes, at times on his chest. This Gobardhan Shila (গোবর্ধন শিলা) was always wet, being drenched with tears constantly coming out of Gourhari's eyes. Gourhari always wept in Krishna-separation and considered this Gobardhan Shila as the body of Lord Krishna. This Gobardhan Shila and Gunja-Mala were worshipped continually by Gourhari for three years.

Being now extremely satisfied and pleased with Raghunath's Bairagya (বৈরাগ্য), Mahaprabhu presented Raghunath with that Gobardhan Shila and Gunja-Mala and said, "Sattwik-Seva of this Gobardhan Shila would enable you to acquire the weath of Krishna Prem."

Raghunath considered himself very lucky and fortunate and asked Mahaprabhu how and with what the 'Sattwik-Seva' (সাত্বিক সেবা) of that sacred Gobardhan-Shila could be performed. Prabhu replied, "A pitcher full of water and eight spiked twigs of tender Tulasi, you would require daily (এক কুড়া জল ও আটটি তুলসী মঞ্জরা)" Raghunath started worshipping that Gobardhan Shila as if he was worshipping Brajendra-Nandan (ব্রজেন্দ্র নন্দন) Krishna himself directly. As soon as this flashed into Raghunath's mind that this Gobardhan Shila was handed over to him personally and with his own hands by Mahaprabhu himself, he wept and wept. Realisation then slowly dawned in the mind of Raghunath, that by handing him the Gobardhan Shila and Gunja-Mala, Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar placed Raghunath at the lotus feet of Shri Radharani herself.

More than twenty-three hours Raghunath out of twenty four hours in a day spent on contemplation and meditation on the BRAJA-LILA (ব্রজ-লীলা). He ate only because the body

needed it, but he never ate or even tasted any appetizing, delicious, juicy food. Except torn quilts, he did not wear anything. As a lion made on a stone is immutable, so was Raghunath's pattern of living and contemplation.



PASSING AWAY OF SHRI HARIDAS

There was none as devoted to Shri Gouranga Sundar as Shri Haridas Thakur. Haridas had pledged that he must complete three lakhs of Japas daily and till that was completed he would not eat anything. This he faithfully followed. All other devotees considered Shri Haridas as the incarnate of NAM-BRAHMA (নাম-ব্রহ্ম). At Puri, Haridas's thatched hut was near the Siddha-Bakul (সিক-বকুল) tree. Haridas seldom left his hut to go anywhere. He would only come out of his hut daily to have a glimpse of Lord Jagannath's temple-top from the courtyard and would go on with his 'Nam Jap'. Haridas was the humblest of the humblest and was the reflex prototype of the Mantra "TRINADAPI SUNICHEN" (ত্রিনাদপি-সুনীচেন)—humbler than the humble grass itself. None could match Haridas in humility and politeness.

Gour Sundar took his bath daily in the sea of Puri. While going to take his bath he always dropped in to see Haridas and gave him Darshan (দর্শন). Gouranga Sundar also dropped in at Haridas's Kutir (কুটীর) to hear the soft melodious and

constant chanting of HARI-NAM by Shri Haridas Thakur. Gobinda Das would bring Haridas the 'prasada-anna' (প্রসাদান্ন) of Gouranga Sundar every day.

To his consternation one day Gobinda found Haridas ill. He was lying down on the floor yet continuing with his Hari-nam chanting. As on that day his pledged daily three lakh Nam-Japs could not be completed, Haridas was reluctant to get up and take the food brought by Gobinda. But as Mahaprasadam was brought, Haridas said, "I should not touch food as my Nam-Jap sankhya has not been completed, yet how dare I show disrespect to the Mahaprasadam by not taking it?" Haridas got up and took the food brought by Gobinda. He ate not even a spoonful, and went back to his Nam-Jap.

Gobinda duly reported Haridas's condition to Mahaprabhu. The next day, quite early in the morning, the most merciful Gouranga Mahaprabhu came to Haridas's hut and enquired, "Haridas, are you well?" Haridas replied, "Prabhu, I am physically all right, but my mind is sick." To this Prabhu queried, "Well, Haridas, what actually is troubling you?" "I am unable to complete my scheduled, Nam-Jap sankhya", said Haridas.

Prabhu then told Haridas, "Haridas, now you have not only quite advanced in age, but also, only those who have just started on their path of sadhana (সাধনা) are required strictly to adhere to their daily allotted 'sankhya' of 'Nam-Jap'. But you are already SIDDHA (সিদ্ধ), you don't need to perform the 'Nam Jap' any more, simply because involuntarily inside your entire body-system the AJAPA-JAP (অজপা-জপ) is continuing all the time. You need not utter NAM any more by your mouth. From today you however reduce your Nam-Jap. You descended to this earth only because through you the glories of "NAM BRAHMA" would be propagated. That mission of yours is now complete and fulfilled. Now you reduce the quantity of Nam Jap."

Hearing Mahaprabhu talking in that vein, Haridas Thakur changed the topic very cleverly, and asked, "Prabhu, I have the fear that very soon you yourself would be making an end to this Lila of yours. If that be so, then Prabhu do not keep me alive to be a witness of that Lila Sambaran (लीला संव्रण) of yours. That a time should come when on this earth Prabhu you will be no more with us, but Haridas will still be continuing, that Prabhu should never take place. My Lord, before your present Lila is going to be terminated by you, Prabhu, you should ensure that before that happens you remove me from this earth."

Remaining silent for some time after having said these, Haridas again spoke, "One more wish do I have, Prabhu. It is my earnest desire that when I shall die, I shall be having your lotus-feet upon my chest, and clasping your feet and keeping my eyes open gazing at your moon face I should then depart. At that moment of my death, I shall be chanting your sweet name Gourhari and no other NAM, Prabhu and in this way I should be allowed to depart—these then are my only desires, Prabhu "

This prayer of Haridas put Mahaprabhu in a very difficult situation. Prabhu did not know exactly what answer he should give. If he answered, "Yes", then that would be connoted as a very cruel answer by others because he then will be agreeing to Haridas's death and not doing anything to dissuade him from it or doing something to prevent it. Further agreeing to Haridas's wishes would also declare to others that very soon Prabhu himself would be no longer amongst his devotees. On the other hand, if he answered with a "No", then that too would also mean that Prabhu did not fulfil the prayer of a devotee.

Mahaprabhu spoke then very sweetly. His words were well chosen to camouflage their real meaning. Prabhu replied, "Haridas, you are a great devotee of the Lord,

Krishna. As such whatever you wish from Him, that would surely be granted to you by Him. But Haridas, why do you want to go away leaving me behind ? Do you not know and realise that all my happiness always revolves round you all. Because all of you are here that is why I am so happy."

Haridas at once replied, "Prabhu, besides me there are thousands and thousands who are helping and adorning your Lila. I am only a small 'ant' (*পিন্‌পেঁ*) compared to them. As the death of an ant does not cause any difficulties in the smooth running of this world, nor does that death cause any ripples to rise even in anyone's mind, my going away thus would also not harm anyone in any way."

Hearing these words uttered by his devotee, the Lord remained silent. He did not utter a single word. Could it be possible that God had no suitable answer to those words ? Mahaprabhu silently departed from Haridas's hut.

The following day, early in the morning, accompanied by many of his devotees Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar arrived at Haridas's hut. Prabhu asked, "What is the news, Haridas ?" Mahaprabhu with this question cleverly enquired of Haridas whether in the meantime any change in his mind had taken place. Haridas replied, "Prabhu, I have no more news to give you. Whatever is your own wish, exactly that too is my news !" Hearing Haridas's reply Prabhu started singing 'Kirtan' (*কীর্তন*) in the courtyard of Haridas's hut. Bakreshwar Pundit was the dancer and the singers were Swarup Damodar, Basudeb Sarbabhauma, Ray Ramananda—all the stalwarts among the devotees. The Kirtan went around the prone body of Shri Haridas Thakur.

Haridas, the king amongst the devotees, was very wily. He suddenly pulled Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu by his hands and thus made him sit by his side, directly in front of his eyes. Prabhu's face looked like a fully blossomed hundred-petalled lotus flower. Haridas's eyes appeared like two thirsty Bhramars

(ভক্ট) trying to drink all the Nectar from the blossomed lotus. Haridas, with his eyes open, went on gazing intently at the lotus-face of Mahaprabhu Gour Sundar. Having thus quenched the thirst of his eyes, Haridas then slowly pulled the lotus feet of Mahaprabhu, and placed those upon his dying heart. Having thus quenched the thirst of both his eyes and mind, Bhakta-Raj (ভক্টরাজ) Haridas suddenly for the first time uttered very loudly "Shri Krishna Chaitanya", and died.

Just like a Maha-Jogeshwar (মহা-যোগেশ্বর), who can depart from his body whenever he so wishes, Shri Shri Haridas Thakur also departed from this earth in a similar fashion. Haridas's Ichchaa-Mrityu (ইচ্ছা-মৃত্যু) reminded all present there then of the scene of Kurukshetra, when the greatest of the warriors and the grand-sire of the Kurus and the Pandavas, "BHISMA" (ভীষ্ম), lay prone on his bed of arrows and gazing at the face of Lord Krishna standing before him, thus departed from the earth, having first prayed to the Lord. Thus the scene as described in the Mahabharata and Shrimad Bhagabatam took shape five hundred years before at Puri also.

Shri Shri Gouranga Sundar, the concentrated form of love and affection for his devotees, then picked up the body of Shri Haridas himself with his own hands and clasping Bhakta-Raj Haridas's body with his arms went round and round in the courtyard, dancing divinely to the rhythms of the divine Kirtan then being sung by all the devotees. That divine scene of Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar dancing in ecstasy and sadness overwhelming the merciful Lord with the body of Bhakta Raj Haridas cannot be described. Those who were fortunate and blessed only saw that divine scene as to what God can do for His devotee.

Seeing that Prabhu looked very tired Swarup Damodar then stood before him with folded hands, and silently pleaded to him to stop dancing carrying the body of Shri Haridas. Prabhu glanced at Swarup and stopped dancing. All other devotees

then came forward and took away the body of Shri Haridas from Prabhu's arms. They then, in a procession, carried the dead body of Shri Haridas to the Puri sea-beach. All along divine Kirtan was sung. Prabhu, however, had again resumed his dancing and he arrived at the sea-beach with the procession. Prabhu went on dancing and the Kirtan by all the devotees also continued without interruption.

With his own hands Prabhu then bathed the body of Shri Haridas with the tenderest of care with sea water, and then declared, "From today this sea at Puri has become the greatest place of pilgrimage—it has become now a Mahatirtha (মহাতীর্থ)."

As all the water of the sacred rivers flow finally into the seas, the seas therefore are also places of pilgrimage. This is true from time eternal. That 'Tirtha' (তীর্থ) became a Mahatirtha because only that day the seawater touched the Ethereal-Body of Bhakta-Raj Shri Haridas Thakur.

During his stay at Puri, Shri Haridas Thakur never bathed in the sea. He never bathed because in that event his soiled feet would have touched and polluted the sacred sea-water.

Seawater started dripping from the bathed body of Shri Haridas. Water dripping from the feet of Shri Haridas was then collected by all the devotees on their hands and with deepest reverence that sea water touched by Shri Haridas's feet was drunk by all. Shri Haridas in his domestic life was born in a family belonging to the Islamic faith. Yet even the staunchest of the Vaidic-Brahmins (বৈদিক ব্রাহ্মণ) like Basudeb Sarbabhauma did not have the slightest hesitation in drinking the 'feet-touched' water dripping from Shri Haridas's dead body.

With the 'Prasadi-Cloth' (প্রসাদী-বস্ত্র)—the cloth which was worn by Lord Jagannath—brought from the temple, Mahaprabhu himself with his own hands and with loving care wrapped up the body of Shri Haridas. He then anointed Shri Haridas's body with sandal paste. A place near the present

day Swarga-Dwar was then selected on the Puri sea-shore and Mahaprabhu with his hands scooped out the sand and in the hollow tenderly laid down Shri Haridas's body. He then covered it up with dry sand picked up from the sea beach by him. All the time however Prabhu went on chanting sweetly Hari-Nam and said 'Hari-Bole', 'Hari-Bole' (হরি বোল, হরি বোল).

Singing 'Kirtan' all the other devotees went round the body of Shri Haridas. The sweet, deep and melodious 'Kirtan' filled the entire earth and sky which reverberated with it.

That the Merciful Lord always heeded to the wishes and prayers of His devotees was again proved. Not only that, everyone also witnessed that BHAGABAN (ভগবান) carries out all the work needed to be carried out for His BHAKTA (ভক্ত).

Shri Shri Haridas Thakur, one of the closest associates and the greatest amongst the devotees of Mahaprabhu Shri Gouranga Sundar, thus departed from this mortal earth exactly in the way he wanted to.



MAHA-UTSAB FOR SHRI HARIDAS

Kirtan around the 'Samadhi-sthal' (সমাধি-স্থল) of Shri Haridas continued unabated. The Puri sea-beach was filled with people. All came to have a glimpse of Bhaktaraj Shri Haridas. All on a sudden Mahaprabhu was found missing from the scene. Prabhu meanwhile had run back all the way

to the main temple-gate. In the Anand Bazar food was sold. Before the shop-keepers Mahaprabhu extended one end of his Chadar (চাদর) and begged food from them all, uttering, "In the honour of my Shri Haridas's NIRJAN (নিৰ্জান) I intend to perform Mahotsab (মহোৎসব) - all of you please give me Bhiksha (ভিক্ষা) of the Maha-Prasadam enabling me to perform that." Such a scene of extreme humility and deep love and affection for a Bhakta was never witnessed before this.

Again before the eyes of the sceptics and non believers Mahaprabhu by his own deeds showed to what level God can come down for His Bhakta.

That Prabhu was missing was noticed by his devotees and speculating on what was happening they came to the temple. Seeing Mahaprabhu begging for food for Haridas they with folded hands pleaded Prabhu to return now to his GAMBHIRA (গম্ভীরা), and assured him that now they themselves would all beg and also buy the Prasadam that would be needed to celebrate the Maha-Utsab. Pundit Kashi Mishra, the court-priest of Raja Pratap, hearing about the Mahotsab, of his own, without being asked, sent sufficient quantities of Maha-Prasadam of Lord Jagannath for the Mahotsab of Shri Shri Haridas Thakur.

At the Mahotsab, Mahaprabhu himself distributed with his own hands the Prasadam to all the assembled devotees. But as unless Prabhu himself took the Prasadam first, others could not start eating, Swarup Damodar requested Prabhu to sit down and take his meal first. Prabhu agreed and took the Prasadam.

The day Shri Haridas's 'Nirjan' took place, Pundit Kashi Mishra had earlier requested Mahaprabhu to take his meal at his house. Instead in the evening Kashi Mishra himself came at the Gambhira of Mahaprabhu and himself carried all the Prasadam for Prabhu to eat. Prabhu sat down along with

Afterwards in a deeply saddened voice and with great humility Prabhu said, "Merciful Krishna by His Grace gave me the opportunity to get acquainted with such a great Bhakta as Haridas. Today, alas, that association has ended. All this had happened by Lord Krishna's will. Immediately Haridas decided that he would leave me, he did so. I could not prevent it. Haridas was the most wonderful gem of a person in this world. Today his Nirjan has left the world bereft of its greatest of jewels."

Hearing such sweet words of praise about Haridas direct from the mouth of Mahaprabhu all the devotees in deepest joy shouted "JAI HARIDAS", "JAI HARIDAS", "JAI HARIDAS". Thus chanting in praise of Sbrī Haridas Thakur all of them then returned to their respective homes.

[illegible]

ABOUT SHRI HARIDAS THAKUR

After Shri Haridas passed away Prabhu Gour Sundar himself decided to relate some incidents of the past life of Shri Haridas. The more he spoke about Shri Haridas, the more joy and pleasure Prabhu got out of it.

Haridas was a Muslim and he was born in the Buddan village of Khulna district of the present day Bangladesh. From whom Haridas got initiated is not known, though many say that it was Shri Adwaita Acharya himself who had initiated Haridas. Haridas never divulged to any one from whom and how he acquired such deep reverence for NAM-JAP and how he became such a calm devotee. It is however known for sure that before Haridas and Shri Adwaita Acharya met, Haridas was already deeply immersed in the ocean of "PREM".

Har das used to live in a jungle near the Benapol village of Jessore in a small thatched hut. He meditated there and performed his Nam-Jap, Nam-Kirtan and Tulasi-Seba. Haridas spent almost the entire day and night in this Bhajan-Dhara (ভজন-ধারা). His pledge was to complete one crore of Nam-Jap every month. This he carried out faithfully.

People, Hindus or Muslims, all respected Shri Haridas. This, however, was not at all liked by one Ramchandra Khan, the zeminder of Bongaon (বঙ্গাওঁ). Ramchandra Khan desired that all his tenants and subjects should revere and respect him alone. Unfortunately the fact was otherwise. He tried many things to win their respect, but did not succeed. Ramchandra Khan then decided to put Shri Haridas to disgrace and thus lower Haridas's position and esteem in the minds of the people.

He chalked out an evil plan. Lakshahira was a young, and beautiful looking prostitute. Ramchandra Khan engaged her and promised her immense rewards if she could charm Haridas with the wiles of her trade. She, for the love of money agreed. But little did she know what was in store for her ! Lakshahira dressed for the occasion and one evening went to Haridas's hut and requested him to allow her to enter. Haridas was then performing his Nam-Jap. He very politely requested Lakshahira to wait on the verandah outside till such time as his Nam-Jap and Nam-Kirtan were over. She waited. It became almost dawn. Lakshahira did not know when her waiting would be over and she would be called inside. As she was hearing the chanting of Nam-Japa from outside she fell asleep. Thus on three consecutive nights Laskhahira went and was not at all successful in making Haridas even look at her. Lakshahira could then extract a promise from Haridas, that he would himself come and fetch her from the verandah of his hut that night as soon as his Nam-Jap would be over. With hope and lust in her mind Lakshahira waited. The night was young then, and Haridas continued with his Nam-Japa and later with Nam-Kirtan. Laskhahira as on previous occasions waited sitting there and unconsciously continued hearing Nam-Kirtan from outside.

Lakshahira after some time fell asleep. With a start she woke up hearing that she was being called by Haridas. To her consternation she found out that dawn was almost breaking and Haridas was standing before her asking her to get up. Laskhahira had in the meantime without her knowing it changed 'Nam' entering her ears and that too 'Nam' uttered by Shri Haridas had such a special power that even not hearing the 'Nam' consciously, 'Nam' had performed its work on Lakshahira. Lakshahira was repentant and full of remorse. Having realised her heinous offences she intended to

commit suicide, she fell down upon the feet of Shri Haridas and wept bitterly. All her sins were washed away by her tears and real repentance. She begged Haridas's pardon. Haridas assured her and bade her get up and chant Hari Nam. Haridas then initiated her, gave her certain Mantra and leaving his own hut for Lakshahira to reside there, he left Benapole and went to Chandpur. From that day Lakshahira became a servant of Lord Krishna. She performed three lakhs of Nam-Japas daily from then onwards.

In spite of being a Muslim, Haridas observed the rites of the Hindus. This news reached the ears of the Muslim ruler. He immediately directed Haridas to stop taking the name of Hari, the Hindu God's name. If his order was not abided by Haridas he was to be taken to the Baishbazar to be whipped there publicly till he left the name of Hari from his tongue,—the ruler ordered. Haridas did not obey the ruler's directives and was taken to Baishbazar. He silently bore the caning. He only prayed to Shri Hari while being caned, "Please pardon them who are beating me," and ultimately fell senseless on the ground.' It was assumed that Haridas had died from the caning, and his body was thrown into the river. He was carried to Phulia by the river current. Haridas regained his consciousness, began residing there and started his Bhajan again.

Haridas lived in a cave. In the cave also lived a highly poisonous snake. The people who came to Haridas could not stay long in that cave because of the poisonous snake. Addressing the snake Haridas said, "Either you live here alone, or I live." The snake, hearing this, came out of its hole and left the cave for ever.

During the seven-prahar-trance at Nabadwip, Mahaprabhu had bared his back and had shown the cane-marks he bore because of Haridas.

At Puridham it was again Mahaprabhu who made all

the arrangements for Haridas to stay near him at the "Siddha-Bakul". Prabhu used to send his Prasadam daily to Haridas to eat and sustain himself.

Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar said about Haridas, "Haridas is the crown jewel of this earth. Without him today the earth has become devoid of any jewels and wealth worth mentioning."



HURT FEELINGS OF JAGADANANDA

Pandit Jagadananda was very much loved by Prabhu. Except for Jagadananda no other devotees dared show any huff on any word or action of Prabhu. Jagadananda dared. That is why the other devotees called him "Incarnate of Satyabhama" (সত্যভামার অবতার).

Jagadananda went to Nabadwip taking Prabhu's permission. Prabhu himself gave Jagadananda Lord Jagannath's Prasadi clothes for Sachimata. Arriving at Nabadwip Jagadananda handed those over to Sachima and said, "Mother, Prabhu often does not take any meals there and says that he has eaten so much at Nabadwip—all the food cooked by my mother—that today I cannot eat anymore!" Sachima replied, "Son, I too also see that I get the feeling that my Nemai is eating the foods cooked by me. Then I feel that these are my dreams only. Now hearing you I believe what I saw or felt was real and not a of my imagination."

Prabhu's body was very soft to the touch, cretain softer than butter as it were. Prabhu never took oil massage. To Jagadananda's eyes, Prabhu's body looked therefore a little dry for lack of oil on it. He desired therefore that he would massage oil on the soft body of Mahaprabhu. With this end in view Jagadananda arranged a full pitcher of sandal-oil to be prepared by Shibananda and carried that pitcher of oil on his head all the way back to Puridham. He handed the oil-pot to Gobinda and directed him to massage Prabhu with that fine scented oil. Gobinda let Prabhu know that a pot of oil had been brought by Jagadananda, and it was his desire that Prabhu be massaged with that oil daily. Hearing this Prabhu was much annoyed and said, "Sanayasis have no right to use oil. Give this oil to the Jagannath Temple and let it be used there for lighting up the temple lamps. Jagadananda's labour and trouble in preparing this oil would then be put to a much better use."

Gobinda relayed back to Jagadananda what Prabhu told him about his oil. Jagadananda heard it and remained silent. He did not utter a single word. After a span of ten days Gobinda again spoke to Prabhu about that oil. Prabhu showed his anger and said, "Well ! Why do you not also keep one masseur to massage the oil. Not only will this bring disgrace to me, but people would taunt you all too."

Next day Prabhu himself informed Jagadananda that he could not use the oil brought by him and this oil be better given instead to the Lord's Temple for lighting the temple lamps. Jagadananda retorted back sharply, "Who told you that I have brought oil for you from Nabadwip ?" and saying this hurriedly entered Prabhu's room and brought back the pot of oil

Jagadananda then threw away the earthen pot full of oil into the courtyard and left in a huff. Jagadananda did not come out of his own room for three days.

On the third day Prabhu himself went to Jagadananda's door and from the outside said, 'Today I shall take my meals at your place. So get up, and start cooking.' Hearing Prabhu, Jagadananda got up, came out and prepared many delicious dishes for Mahaprabhu. At high noon Prabhu came again. Jagadananda washed Prabhu's feet and served the food to Prabhu. Prabhu told Jagadananda to bring out two plates and to serve food for two persons, because Jagadananda and he both would be taking their meals together. Jagadananda did not agree to it. He said, 'No, you first take your meal.' While eating Prabhu commented upon the deliciousness of each and every item that was cooked. Prabhu said, "Because Krishna Himself would be eating these foods that is why He made you cook so excellently." Jagadananda retorted, "He who is eating, is himself the one who ordered for this meal." Jagadananda while saying this, went on giving more items on Prabhu's plate. Prabhu was afraid and said, "If one cooks food in an angry mood it seems the dishes prepared then become more delicious." That day Prabhu ate up ten times his usual meals. He then requested Jagadananda not to press him more to eat. Prabhu got up and before leaving asked Gobinda Das that he should ensure that Jagadananda would now take his meal and left. Jagadananda said to Gobinda, "Gobinda, you better go now and massage Prabhu's tired feet and tell him that I have sat down to take my meals." Gobinda went away. Prabhu questioned Gobinda and made Gobinda return again saying, "Only after you have seen with your own eyes that Jagadananda has taken his meal, then only you come back—not before."

Prabhu used to sleep upon a mat prepared from fine slivers of Banana tree skin. Jagadananda saw that and prepared a pillow stuffed with cotton-wool. Prabhu did not accept it, and in anger taunted him, saying, "Why not bring a good cot

also. Jagadananda wants me to enjoy all the comforts of materialistic life." Jagadananda did not say a word.

Swarup then brought lots of dried leaves of Banana tree and using his finger nails split those into fine slivers. These he stuffed then in between two outer garments and made two pillows for Prabhu. Prabhu used those pillows. The other devotees were now happy that a little bit of comfort to Prabhu could thus be provided. Jagadananda was angry inside seeing such discomforts being unnecessarily borne by Prabhu, but he gave no outward signs of his anger. Everyone saw him deeply sad.

The deep love that developed in Jagadananda for Mahaprabhu Sri Gouranga Sundar is incomparable.

This sort of hardship borne gladly by Mahaprabhu was a lesson to be learnt by the Sannyasis. Prabhu never violated any directives or rituals prescribed by the Scriptures. If one wants others to follow certain things then perhaps, the best way to achieve that goal is that one performs those things faithfully. Gouranga Sundar himself did what he preached.



KRIPA TO KALIDAS

Prabhu used to go to see Jagannath every day. Gobinda always accompanied him with his water pot. Near the northern side of the jamb of the main temple door, there was a deep indentation on the floor. Prabhu first washed his feet with

water in that hole, and then went up all the steps to the Sri Mandir and saw Jagannath.

Mahaprabhu's strict instruction to Gobinda was to ensure that no one could collect the water with which his feet was washed. Yet only a few of the closest of Prabhu's devotees could cleverly collect that water. But no one else was able to do so. Prabhu was washing his feet one day as was his custom, when one elderly person came to him and begged him of 'padodak' (পাদোদক) - water with which his lotus feet had been washed. Prabhu, to everyone's astonishment, gave it. That person had three such sips. Then Prabhu asked him to stop. The "Charan-Amrita" (চরণ-অমৃত) which was forbidden for others, this person was lucky enough to get it straight from Mahaprabhu himself.

He was no other than the uncle of Swarup's Raghunath and was called Kalidas. What good deed of his enabled him to have this a fortune was this : Kalidas made a firm determination that he would partake the "Adhar-Amrita" (অধর-অমৃত) from each Baishnab, whether he was a Brahmin, a Shudra, a poor, or a rich person. No distinctions were to be made, provided he was a Baishnab. Kalidas ate the left-overs of food partaken by all sorts of Baishnabas. Except for one Jharu Thakur, Kalidas was able to obtain the 'Adharamrita' from each of the Baishnabas then residing at Nilachal.

Jharu Thakur was a great devotee, but by profession he was a Bhuin-Mali (ভূই-মালী) (ground sweeper). Jharu Thakur did not permit his eaten food to be taken by Kalidas at any cost. On the other hand Kalidas too had promised that he would take the 'Adhar-Amrita' of Jharu Thakur. Kalidas took up the dust of the roads which Jharu Thakur trod upon and with that anointed his body.

One day Kalidas sent a gift of basketful of delicious mangoes to Jharu Thakur and his wife. After they ate up the

mangoes, the stones were all dug into the ground by them. Kalidas was hiding nearby. After Jharu Thakur and his wife went away, Kalidas dug those up from the ground and with great relish sucked the left-over of mangoe fruits' skins and stones already eaten up by them. While Kalidas was thus licking up the mangoe stones, he was suddenly flooded by 'Prem' (প্রেম). Mahaprabhu, the knower of all that happens, knew what devotion Kalidas had for the Baishnabas and with what deep reverence Kalidas used to partake the "Adhar Amrita" of the Baishnabas. All those were known to Mahaprabhu, as he was omniscient.

This deep devotion to the Baishnabas enabled Kalidas to get the favour of getting the Lord's Charan-Amrita (চরণামৃত) straight from the Lord Himself.

Mahaprabhu after seeing Lord Jagannath came back to his Gambhira and took his meal. Then at the gesture of Prabhu, Gobinda brought Prabhu's left-overs to Kalidas and Kalidas hungrily ate those up.

The fortune that befalls one by taking "Adhar-Amrita" of the Baishnabas was thus proclaimed to all by Prabhu by allowing Kalidas to take his Charan-Amrita (চরণামৃত) and Adhar-Amrita (অধরামৃত).

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KRIPA TO RAGHUNATH BHATTÀ

Raghunath Bhatta was the son of Tapan Mishra. During his sojourn in East Bengal Prabhu had bestowed his Kripa on Tapan Mishra. As directed by Prabhu, Tapan Mishra was residing at Kashi Dham. Mahaprabhu used to take his meals at Tapan Mishra's house whenever he went to Kashi. During that time the child Raghunath had seen Prabhu Gouranga Sundar. Raghunath grew up into a young lad and came to Nilachal to take shelter at the lotus feet of Mahaprabhu.

Prabhu embraced Raghunath. Raghunath was a very good cook and whatever he cooked for Prabhu, Prabhu used to eat it with relish. Raghunath stayed for about eight months near Mahaprabhu and then again left for Kashi Dham. Before his departure, Prabhu Gouranga Sundar gave Raghunath only three pieces of advice. These were—Do not marry; always serve your old parents; study Shrimad Bhagabatam from a Baishnab.

Bhatta Raghunath faithfully observed the advice given to him. After the demise of his parents, Raghunath again returned to Mahaprabhu at Puri and stayed with him for another eight months. Then Mahaprabhu directed him, "Go to Brindaban and stay there with Rupa and Sanatan. Always study Shrimad Bhagabatam. Chant 'Krishna-Nam' always. And Krishna would bestow his kripa on you."

Raghunath Bhatta proceeded to Brindaban from Puri as ordered by Mahaprabhu. Because of his association with Shri Rupa and Shri Sanatan, Bhatta turned out to be a great Bha_abat scholar. When he read out Bhagabatam sattwik signs appeared on his body. Raghunath possessed a very

melodious voice. He also was well versed in singing. These qualities came out in his discourses on Shrimad Bhagabatam, which was a real pleasure to his audience.

All these happened to Raghunath Bhatta because of the power imparted to him by Mahaprabhu and by Prabhu's kripa on him only. Among the best loved Goswamis of Mahaprabhu, Raghunath Bhatta was soon reckoned as one.



KRIPA TO RAJA PRATAP RUDRA

It was the earnest desire of Raja Pratap Rudra—king of Puri—that he could see Prabhu Gouranga Sundar dancing in ecstasy for the Lord. But this Prabhu did never allow Raja then requested Basudeb Sarbabhauma and other devotees to show him Gourangadeb when he was dancing, but of course without Prabhu's knowledge. The Raja requested that when Prabhu would be dancing in an almost senseless condition and would not be aware of what was happening around him, only then he be allowed to enter.

One day by the grace of Providence, Gourhari was dancing alone. Raja got the news and awaited alone hidden from Prabhu. Raja saw wonderful waves of feelings transpiring through Mahaprabhu while he was thus dancing. Torrents of tears flowed from his lotus eyes. His body was frequented with tremors, perspiration, goose pimples and paleness. Frequently Prabhu

fell down violently on the earth. At times Prabhu roared like a lion. At times he cried and wailed. He danced raising his golden coloured hands upwards.

This eye-pleasing and wonderful dance of Mahaprabhu was enjoyed by Raja Pratap to his heart's content. But certain doubts arose suddenly in the Raja's mind. Raja saw that Prabhu had running nose and saliva was dripping out of his mouth and his entire body was thus covered with dust, saliva and water from his running nose. These created certain repulsions in Pratap.

At night Raja was asleep in his palace bed-room. He was dreaming. He dreamt that he was at the Jagannath temple, and saw that Lord Jagannath's body was covered with dust. From the Lord's eyes tears like the Ganga river were flowing out. The Lord had a running nose too, saliva was dripping out of the Lord's mouth. All these were drenching Lord Jagannath's body. In his dream itself Raja thought what sort of a sport was this of Lord Jagannath? Raja desired to touch the sacred body of Lord Jagannath. But in his dream Raja heard Jagannath telling him, "Your body is anointed with camphor, musk and other fine things. My body is dusty and dirty and is not fit to be touched by you." After this Raja saw in Lord Jagannath's place Sri Krishna Chaitanya Deb himself sitting with his own body smeared with the same dust and dirt.

Raja Pratap Rudra woke up with a start and realised that Chaitanya Deb and Lord Jagannath were identical.

Apane Shri Jagannath Chaitanya Goswain
Raja Janilen, lthe Kichu Bhed Nai.

‘আপনে শ্রীজগন্নাথ চৈতন্য গোস্বামি।

রাজা জানিলেন; ইথে কিছু ভেদ নাই।’

TAKING MEALS AT ADWAITA'S PLACE

From Gauda Desh Adwaita Acharya along with his wife Sitadevi arrived at Nilachal Puridham. He invited Mahaprabhu to take his mid-day meal at his place. Adwaita himself along with Sitadevi cooked food for Mahaprabhu using all the nicest of ingredients they had so lovingly brought with them from Shantipur.

Adwaita's innermost desire was that all the dishes cooked should be eaten up by Mahaprabhu himself. But he was afraid that should Prabhu arrive with all his retinue then Prabhu would take practically very little food. Hence he wished that if Prabhu came alone then only his hidden desire would be fulfilled. But no signs existed to let that happen.

Suddenly during the noon time, fierce gusts of wind blew, torrents of rain poured down, and a hail storm started up. All fled helter skelter. Adwaita Acharya arranged all the dishes and placing Tulasi leaves on each of the dishes offered them for Bhog (ভোগ) and sat in meditation with a deep wish that Prabhu should come to take his meals accompanied by none. At that precise moment Mahaprabhu arrived at Adwaita's house alone.

Adwaita fed Prabhu with his heart filled with joy. Whatever Adwaita gave, Prabhu ate that up. The desire of Adwaita was thus fulfilled. Suddenly Prabhu gave an angelic smile and addressed Adwaita Acharya :—

Prabhu Bole Aar Kano Lukao Acharya
Jata Jhar Bristi Hoi Sab Tomari Je Karjya

“প্রভু বোলে আর কেনো লুকানো আচার্য
যত ঝড় ঝুটি হয় সব তোমারি যে কার্য।”

SITANATH—YOU LOSE

Shri Shri Gour Sundar was sitting in Gambhira when Adwaita Acharya came, pronamed (প্রণাম করলেন) Prabhu and sat before him. Being asked from where he was now coming, Adwaita answered, "I come from Jagannath Jiu's temple. I saw His moon face having gone around him five or seven times, and now I have come to you."

Hearing this Prabhu immediately clapped his hands and smilingly said, "Acharya, you have lost, you have lost." Acharya was a bit perplexed hearing that, and enquired what did he really lost. As he possessed no wealth nor property, then what was there for him to lose ? Prabhu replied, "Acharya, when you went behind during your Pradakshin around Lord Jagannath, at that time you could not see the Lord's moon-face. You were thus deprived of the joy that arises out of seeing the Lord's face. When I look at Jagannath I see his moon-face and go on seeing it. I do not look at anything else."

Hearing this, Adwaita with folded hands said, "In these matters I had always been defeated by you, and would lose to you every time in the future too. The words that you just now told me, there is no one else other than you in this world capable of or having the right to utter those words."

E Kathar Adhikari Aar Tribhubane
Satya Kahilang Ei, Nahi Toma Bine.

“এ কথার অধিকারী আর ত্রিভুবনে
সত্য কহিলাঙ্গ এই, নাহি তোমা বিনে।”

APPEAL TO NETAI CHAND

Without anyone's knowledge, one day Shri Shri Gour Sundar advised Netaichand, "Shripad, you go back to Nabadwip as soon as possible. If you do not go back, then I cannot keep my promise. You are aware that I promised to immerse every one, be he illiterate, or not fit enough, or poor, in the ocean of 'Prem'. If you too stay at Nilachal following the rites and duties of a Sannyasi, then how could my promise be fulfilled? If you desire that my promised words are to be honoured, then you go back to Gauda Desh immediately. Bestow BHAKTI on all." Prabhu told Netai :—

Murkha Nich Patit Duhkhita Jata Jan,
Bhakti Daya Karo Gia Sabar Mochan.

“দুখ নীচ পতিত দুঃখিত যত জন,
ভক্তি দয়া করো গিয়া সবাব মোচন।”

Being thus commanded Nityananda Prabhu along with his own devotees proceeded to Gauda Desh. His devotees were Ram Das, Gadadhar Das Raghunath Bedojha, Krishna Das Pundit, Parameshwar Das and Purandar Pundit. All of them went back to Gauda Desh with their beloved Netaichand.

Nityananda Prabhu started his mission to spread the name and teachings of Shri Gouranga Sundar in the Gauda Desh. Three brothers Madhab Ghosh, Gobinda Ghosh and Basu Ghosh, all of them very good singers, came and joined the team led by Nityananda Prabhu on his mission to spread Gour consciousness and Krishna consciousness. The air and sky of Bengal reverberated with :—Je Jan Gouranga Bhaje, Se Hai Amar Pran Re (যে জন গোরাঙ্গ ভজে, সে হয় আমার প্রাণ রে ।)

When Abadhut Nityananda danced, tremors passed through

the earth because of his vigorous dance. On whom Netaichand cast his merciful eyes while dancing, he fell on the ground being endowed with the deep feeling of Prem. To propagate the Prema Ras (প্রেম-রস) Prabhu Nityananda started his campaign.



FATHER PUNDARIK

Once at Nabadwip when Gourhari was engaged in a sportive mood, at that time he had cried out, "Father Pundarik, Father Pundarik". None of his devotees understood its meaning at that time ; subsequently they realised that Prabhu had called Pundarik Bidyanidhi as "father", being engrossed with the feelings of Shrimati Radharani. Pundarik was considered as the incarnate of Shfi Radhika's father Brishabhanu Raj.

Pundarik Bidyanidhi resided at Mekhal, in the Chattagram district—now in Bangladesh. Pundarik being attracted by the name and fame of Gouranga Sundar came down to Nabadwip, and was residing in secrecy at one of his devotee's house. Mukunda also resided near Pundarik's residence and he knew him. One day Mukunda went to visit Bidyanidhi along with Gadadhar.

Gadadhar was repulsed observing Pundarik's dress, ornaments, bed, servants, garlands, scents and their excesses. Understanding what was passing through the mind of Gadadhar about Bidyanidhi, seeing all these things, Mukunda

recited then one sloka from Shrimad Bhagabatam. This sloka was from the chapter describing the liberation of 'Putana'. Having described the Putana liberation Likakhata, Shri Sukdev Goswami commented that if Krishna could send people like 'Putana' to Baikuntha, giving her the position of Wet-Mother (ধাত্রী মাতা) to the Lord, then except Krishna 'Pada-Padma' (পাদপদ্মা) who else's shelter should one take ?

Immediately Mukunda uttered this particular sloka of the Bhagabatam, Bidyanidhi hearing it almost entered into a trance. He fell down from his seat, rolled on the ground and started uttering, "Kamba Dayalum Sharanam Brajem (কংবা দয়ালু শরণম্ ব্রজেম)." All his beautiful attires and jewelleries were torn and dirtied. Seeing now before his own eyes such a great Baishnab, Gadadhar became repentant for his past wrong assumptions about Bidyanidhi. Gadadhar frankly narrated all to Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu advised Gadadhar to get initiated by Pundarik Bidyanidhi and to become his disciple to remedy his Baishnab-Aparadh. Gadadhar did as he was directed.

After coming to Nilachal, one day Gadadhar confided to Prabhu Gour Sundar that by mistake he divulged his 'Ista-Mantra' (ইষ্ট মন্ত্র) to another person, and since then even if he meditated, the Ista-Mantra was not revealed to him. Gadadhar requested Mahaprabhu to give the same Mantra to him. Prabhu replied, "Your Guru Bidyanidhi is coming, so whatever is required to be done would be done by him."

Bidyanidhi arrived soon. "Father, you have come, you have come," uttered Prabhu in sheer pleasure. At Prabhu's wish Gadadhar was again given the 'Ista-Mantra' by Bidyanidhi.

PUNISHMENT OF PREMNIDHI

Shri Pundarik Bidyanidhi was the incarnate of Raja Brisa Bhanu Gadadhar was overwhelmed with the feelings of Shri Radhika. At the Barshan they were then Father and Daughter —this time at Nadia their relationship was Guru and his disciple. The Bhaktas called Bidyanidhi Premnidhi. From the day of his stay at Nabadwip. Bidyanidhi became friendly with 'Swarup-Damodar'. One day Bidyanidhi and Swarup—two friends—went to see the "Odhal Shasthi" drama being performed. In the drama the Pandas put on unwashed Pandua cloth of Lord Jagannath. Seeing this Premnidhi took offence.

At night when Bidyanidhi was sleeping he saw in his dream the two brothers, Jagannath and Balaram. The two brothers came near Premnidhi and both of them slapped his face on both sides and Jagannath said, "The Drama that I have myself ordained, in that too you impose unholy things? How dare you?"

In his dream Premnidhi cried out seeking their pardon. When he woke up he found solid finger imprints on his face as a proof of having been slapped.

In the morning Swarup came and asked him to wake up enquiring why he was so late, and told him to go and see Jagannath. Shri Premnidhi said, "Today the morning has dawned rather very well for me. I am so fortunate that the Lord's lotus hands have slapped my face and cheek."

This type of 'Prem-Bhakti' that always afflicted Pundarik Premnidhi was unheard of. For these reasons Shri Gourchandra himself used to hail him loudly calling, "Bap, Bap"—Father, oh, Father!"

Let the glory of Lord Gouranga and his devotees triumph in this world.



SONG OF DEVDASI

One day Prabhu was going to Jamshwar Tota. Suddenly he heard some one singing in a melodious voice 'Gita-Gobindam' in the Gurjari Raga. Hearing the song from far off, Prabhu was in ecstasy and ran to meet the person who was then singing that song. The song of Gita-Gobindam drove Prabhu mad and he ran and ran, not caring for the thorns scratching his feet and stones, piercing his tender feet.

Gobinda Das, the constant companion of Prabhu, also ran to catch hold of Prabhu. He succeeded and said, "Prabhu, the singer is a Dev-Dasi." That a woman was singing brought back senses to Prabhu and he stopped. He said, "Gobinda, you saved my life. If I had touched a woman I would have died."



AN ABORIGINAL WOMAN

Mahaprabhu always saw Lord Jagannath standing by the side of the Garuda Stambha (गरुड स्तम्भ). Garuda is one of the best devotees of Lord Narayana. Mahaprabhu never saw the god transgressing the rights of the Lord's devotee. The 'Garuda-Stambha' is at a distance from Lord Jagannath's throne. From the open place thousands of people also had a glimpse of Lord Jagannath standing near this Garuda Stambha.

One day there was quite a huge crowd in the temple. All the spaces were occupied and it was very difficult to have a glimpse even of the Lord by anybody. Gouranga Sundar was standing at his usual place by the side of the Garuda Stambha, and was looking at Lord Jagannath from there. Prabhu was quite tall. In her deepest urge to have at least a glimpse of Lord Jagannath, one aboriginal woman climbed up the Garuda Stambha and putting her legs on the shoulder of Mahaprabhu saw her beloved Jagannath's lotus-face to her heart's content, being oblivious totally of what she was doing and who else was there near by or around her.

Gobinda saw that and tried to take away this aboriginal woman. Prabhu said, "Gobinda, do not remove her. Do not say any harsh words to her. Let her see from here her beloved Jagannath's lotus face to her heart's content."

After some time, that aboriginal woman came down from the top to the temple floor. She then realised what she had done and touched Prabhu's feet and showed her respect. Mahaprabhu addressed her, "The Lord has not given me this sort of hankering for Jagannath, as he has bestowed upon this devotee of His."

Prabhu said to all, "Her body and soul were absorbed in the Lord. That she placed her feet on my shoulders she did not even realise it. Such was her concentration and urge to see her beloved Lord Jagannath. "She is most fortunate and an endowed soul "



MOOD OF DIVINE INSANITY

Mahaprabhu observed the Chatak Hill on his way to the Puri sea. As soon as Prabhu saw the Chatak Hill from far off, he was engrossed with the feeling that this hill was the GIRI GOBARDHAN (গিরি গোবর্ধন)

Immediately Prabhu ran towards it, chanting a sloka of Shrimad Bhagabatam where the glories of Gobardhan Hill have been sung.

Gobinda too ran. But he was unable to catch hold of Mahaprabhu. Prabhu was running very fast. Suddenly a feeling of petrification overcame Prabhu. He could not move at all and fell down. Prabhu was seized with unseen and unheard of feelings which enlarged every pore of his skin, each of which took the shape of a large ball. His whole body was covered with goose-bumps. From each and every pore of the skin, blood oozed out like perspiration. Gurgling sounds came of his throat. No words or speeches came out of his mouth. From his eyestears like torrents of rain water flowed

down his cheeks. The whole body became so pale that it looked as white as a bleached conch-shell. His whole body was trembling like a Banana tree, violently whipped by lashing winds.

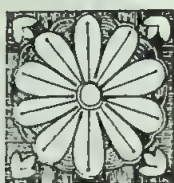
Gobinda was running after Prabhu. Now he came near him. Seeing these signs Gobinda was non-plussed and did not at all know what was to be done to remove those symptoms. Like a mad man he drenched Prabhu with the water from the water pot carried by him and fanned Prabhu's body with his Uttariya (উত্তরীয়া). By this time the news about Prabhu had spread somehow, and Swarup Damodar, Pundit Gadadhar, Jagadananda, Ramai, Nandai, Puri, Bharati, Khanja Bhagaban Acharya, all came running to the sea-beach. All the eight Sattwik signs (অষ্ট সাত্বিক-ভাব) came out distinctly on the holy body of Mahaprabhu. Seeing this all the devotees of Prabhu started crying.

What more the devotees could do except singing loudly the Lord's name and thus trying to wake Him? Some of them brought cold water and massaged Prabhu's body with that. The Sankirtan went on for a long time. Prabhu was still lying on the sea-shore. Suddenly Prabhu gave a loud shout of Hari Bole, Hari Bole and sat up.

Everyone was relieved to see Prabhu back again to his normal self and in joy shouted 'Hari-Nam'. Prabhu then addressed Swarup and enquired as to who brought him back there from the Gobardhan Hill? Prabhu then said, "I saw the wonderful sweet Lila of Krishna, but again lost Him. I was at the Gobardhan Giri. Around the Gobardhan Giri all the cows were grazing. Krishna played on His Flute. Hearing the Flute, Shri Radha Thakurani came running. Oh! How beautiful she looked! What ecstatic and divine feelings were flowing out of her, that I fail to describe. Shri Krishna entered a cave with Shri Radhika. All the Sakhis (সখীরা) went to pluck flowers."

"Precisely at that moment you all brought me back here. Even being fortunate to see the sweet 'Krishna-Lila' I could not see any further. I lost the joy that was given me. Oh ! Into what deep sorrow I am now plunged !"

All the devotees remained silent, and had nothing to say to Prabhu even to console him.



ASSUMING A LARGE FORM IN DIVINE INSANITY MOOD

Inside the Gambhira (গম্ভীরা) Prabhu was lying on the floor. Swarup was lying outside near the door. Throughout the night Prabhu spent the time singing loudly the Lord's name. Suddenly Swarup, not hearing any sound coming out from Prabhu's room, opened the door and entered it. Prabhu was not inside the room, but all the three doors on the three sides of the room were closed from inside. The only door lying open was opened from outside by Swarup himself. Everyone became perplexed and began their search for him. At last they traced Prabhu lying unconscious on the northern side of the main gate of the Puri temple.

The condition and shape of Prabhu's body begged description. The body was lying prone and unconscious. Breathing had stopped. The body was five cubits in length. Each of his hands had also elongated and measured about

1.3 metres in length (তিন হাত দীর্ঘ) against the normal measurement of about 45 centimetres in length ! All the joints in his body were disjointed and a gap of about 25 centimetres existed between each of the joints of hands, armpit, knee and so forth. The bones were just covered by a thin skin, because the entire structure having been elongated.

Saliva and froth were forming in his mouth. His eyes were wide open, and apparently with lifeless eyes Prabhu stared upwards. His whole body was full of goose bumps.

Seeing Prabhu in this state all the devotees cried out in deep anguish. They had never seen before any human being in this state. They were astounded, perplexed and full of awe.

Swarup started singing Harinam-Sankirtan in the loudest possible voice which rended the skies. The Hari Nam and Krishna Nam entered Prabhu's subconscious self and went on percolating through his the cells and tissues of his body. Sankirtan continued for a long time. Suddenly Prabhu sat up and roared. Very soon Prabhu's body turned back to its original state. How possibly these could happen is not clear. This state is called the Ekadash Dasha (একাদশ দশা). Shri Radhika had the Dasama Dasha (দশম দশা).



PUMPKIN SHAPE DURING DIVINE INSANITY

Shri Shri Prabhu Gour Hari was constantly in that divine mood. He appeared insane to normal eyes. At times Prabhu spoke incoherently. One day he spent practically the entire night discussing Krishna and His activities with Ray Ramananda and Swarup. Depending on the type of feelings that engrossed Mahaprabhu, Ray Ramananda recited slokas or sang Baishnab Padabalis (বৈষ্ণব পদাবলী) which complemented or supplemented the feelings of Mahaprabhu. At times Ramananda recited from Gita Gobindam, Chandidas or Bidyapati. Often Prabhu himself uttered slokas, and himself also lamented and explained those slokas.

It was almost midnight. Prabhu was sleeping. Swarup and Ram Ray were resting in their respective rooms. Gobinda slept blocking the only exit door of Prabhu's Gambhira. The door to the room was kept shut from outside. How and when Prabhu left that Gambhira hearing Krishna playing on His Flute could never be found out.

On the southern side of the temple's main gate were kept the Tailangi (belonging to Telengana district) milch cows of the temple. Prabhu heard Krishna playing on his flute and ran like one mad and fainted near those cows. Suddenly Gobinda woke up. He strained his ears to catch any sound coming out of Prabhu's room to assure him at least that all was well with Prabhu inside. Not hearing any kind of sound Gobinda opened Prabhu's door. To his surprise and consternation he found Prabhu's room empty. Gobinda immediately woke up Swarupa. They along with others then went out and frantically searched everywhere. At last they traced Prabhu amongst those

cows. But in what condition ? Prabhu's hands and feet had retreated inside his body. His whole body had swollen up and was looking like a big round pumpkin ! Froth was coming out of his mouth. Large goose-bumps encompassed the entire body. Silent tears were flowing out incessantly out of his eyes. The Tailangi cows were going round and round Prabhu's body and were smelling the divine scent coming out of Prabhu's pumpkin-shaped body.

Despite all attempts, this time Prabhu did not come back to his normal self. He was then carefully picked up and brought all the way to the Gambhira. There surrounding him all the devotees started singing Nam-Sankirtan melodiously yet as loudly as possible. After many hours of Nam-Sankirtan, very slowly Prabhu's normal senses returned. The retreated hands and feet which so long looked like flippers came out of his body. The body took the form of a normal-bodied person leaving no signs of the distortions that took place earlier.

Regaining his senses Prabhu said, "Swarup, what have you done ? Suddenly I heard Lord Krishna's flute calling me. I ran to Bindaban and saw Shri Radha also coming running to their 'Kunja'. She entered it along with Shri Krishna. I too followed them and was allowed to enter their Kunja. Inside the Kunja I relished their Lilas, their laughters, their teasing each other and when I was at the peak of my bliss, precisely at that moment you all forcibly brought me back here from the Radha-Krishna Kunja of Brindaban. Why Swarup ? Why ? I am so unfortunate that now I can no longer hear their sweet heavenly voices nor can I see their Jugal-Murti (যুগল-মূর্তি) !" This complete contraction of one's body can only happen in the Dwadasha-Dasha (দ্বাদশ দশ) of Mahabhab.

*PICKED IN THE FISHERMAN'S NET
DURING DIVINE INSANITY*

On another occasion, observing the sea from far off, Prabhu ran mistaking the sea for the Jamuna of Brindaban. The devotees this time could not find him. They did not find him in the temples, nor in the Gundicha. They went to Prabhu's room and opened the doors. They did not find him this time in any of the places, where Prabhu could be earlier. They now fanned out in search of him. A group anxiously went out to search for Mahaprabhu at the Chatak Hills. There too he could not be located. All of them felt panicky this time. The night turned into morning, yet nowhere could Prabhu be traced. All believed that this time Prabhu had vanished for ever from their midst and they became most sad.

Swarup, however, was still frantically searching for him and along with a few others was proceeding towards the east along the sea-shore. Suddenly he noticed that one fisherman, with the fishing net hanging from his shoulders, was coming along. The fisherman, however, was behaving in a very odd fashion. At times he was chanting the name of Hari, at times he was laughing aloud, at times he was weeping and dancing !

Swarup enquired of him, "Have you seen any man going this way ?" The fisherman said, "No, I have not, but from the sea I picked up a dead body in my net when fishing. I am rather afraid, because after I touched his dead body, probably a ghost entered me and my body started trembling and tears flowed out of my eyes involuntarily. This body must be that of a Brahma-Daitya (ब्रह्मदैत) as the body looks very peculiar. The body is seven cubits long. The hands themselves are

each three cubits in length. All the joints in the body are loose. The body is senseless but, groaning sounds are coming out from the throat."

Swarup understood that this one could be no one else than Mahaprabhu himself. He told the fisherman, "I am the Ojha (ওজা). I would drive away the ghost" Saying this he slapped three times on the back of the fisherman and said, "The ghost has now been driven away. Now show me the one whom you picked up in your net. You have picked up Mahaprabhu."

The fisherman said, "No, he cannot be Mahaprabhu. I have seen Mahaprabhu several times before. This is not his form. This body is a terribly distorted one!" Swarup said, "This body of his has taken this shape because of intense Prem! You please show me the body."

The fisherman then showed the body of Mahaprabhu he was carrying in his net. The body had become very pale. The whole body was totally disjointed, hence could not be gathered up. Then it was carefully laid upon a cloth spread on the sea beach. Sand was sprinkled on the body. Dry loin-cloth (কৌপিন) was placed on the lower part. And all started singing Kirtan in their loudest of voices.

After some time the tune of Kirtan entered Prabhu's ears. Prabhu roared back and sat up. Immediately he sat up, his body became its normal self! However Prabhu was still in a semi-comatic stage, and spoke rather incoherently staring at the sky. The devotees heard what Prabhu said.

Prabhu said, "I saw 'Brajendra Nandan' having water sports with his friends. From the banks of the river one 'Sakhi' was showing me Krishna's water sport. I saw that Shri Krishna first bathed in the river Jamuna with all the Gopis. They all began splashing water on each other. Krishna splashed water on the Gopis. Gopis also did the same on

Krishna. After that they started pulling each other by the hands. The Gopis pulled Krishna by his hands, and Krishna too pulled the Gopis towards him. Then they started kissing each other. Krishna kissed the Gopis. The Gopis in turn kissed Krishna back. After these were over, they started embracing each other. The Gopis clasped Krishna in their bosoms. Krishna too clasped back all the Gopis individually and simultaneously !! Shri Krishna then took Shri Radhika and both of them then went to the deepest portion of the river. There Shri Radha floated on the water clasping Krishna by the neck. There were as many Krishnas as there were the Gopis there !! By the side of each Gopi was one Krishna ! Gopis had honey-gold lotus-complexioned bodies. Krishna had deep-blue lotus-complexioned body. The golden lotuses and the blue lotuses were touching each other and floating on the river Jamuna.

Krishna wanted to touch the bosoms of the Gopis. The Gopis prevented Krishna from doing it. Oh, what a divine scene ! It appeared that Rasa Samudra (রস-সমুদ্র) was bubbling forth. Forgetting everything, I was witnessing this divine 'Radha-Krishna-Gopi Lila', and at that moment you called me. Oh, my misfortune !"

"Kanha Jamuna Brindaban,

Kanha Krishna Gopigan

Sei Sukh Bhanga Karaila "

"কাহা যমুনা ব্রন্দাবন

কাহা কৃষ্ণ গোপীগণ

সেই সুখ ভঙ্গ করাইলা ।"

"You deprived me enjoying this unique lila of Brindaban."

OH ! KRISHNA WHERE ARE YOU ?

All the time Prabhu was engulfed in the thought of Radharani. Inside the Gambhira Prabhu stayed physically but mentally he became the reflex prototype of Shrimati Radharani. He always considered him to be at Brindaban, and was lamenting for Krishna-separation. He was in the deepest anguish having been thus separated from Krishna. It was not Prabhu but Shrimati Radharani who was lamenting for her beloved Krishna.

Prabhu could not sleep. He could not realise at all what he was doing in his deep anguish born of Krishna-separation feelings. He rubbed his face on the hard stone floor and blood spurted out. His mouth, cheeks, nose all got lacerated with wounds.

When he groaned, Swarup entered the darkened Gambhira, lighted the lamp and was astounded to see the acute condition of Prabhu's lacerated face ! Swarup tenderly picked up Prabhu and laid him on his bed and enquired how he inflicted such wounds on his face ? Prabhu replied, 'In my anxiety, I could not remain inside the room. I could not find the doors so that I might go out. I searched for an opening on the walls with my face. Thus my face got lacerated and blood came out. When it happened I was not at all aware of that.'

Swarup pondered over the problem facing them, and evolved out a plan. He asked Shankar Pundit to stay inside the room with Mahaprabhu. Shankar slept at the feet of Prabhu and Prabhu laid his lotus feet upon the prone body of Shankar Pundit. Shankar Pundit was given a new name by the devotees.

He was called since then Prabhu's PADA-UPADHAN (পদ-উপাধান), pillow of the feet.

Shankar massaged Prabhu's lotus feet. After Prabhu fell asleep, Shankar laid himself down at Prabhu's feet. Prabhu woke up and found Shankar asleep, and from Shankar's body the wrapper was displaced. With affection Prabhu himself covered Shankar properly so that Shankar did not catch cold. Because of Shankar, Prabhu could not get up and go out of his room or could get self-inflicted wounds.

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APPRECIATION OF GOURANGA MAHAPRABHU'S TEACHINGS

At Nilachal Puri Dham Mahaprabhu devoted his entire life and time, himself appreciating the "Biraha-Rasa" (বিরহ-রস) of Shri Radharani. He was always engulfed in the deepest feelings of Shri Radhika, and could thus understand exactly what passed through Shri Radha when she could not see or meet Krishna any more. What intense love Shri Radhika had for Shri Krishna could only be appreciated and understood if one could somehow enter the heart of Shri Radhika. How much Shri Radhika loved him was one of the major desires that Shri Krishna wanted to know, but this he could not achieve when he was Krishna in the Dwapara Yuga. He descended

as Gour Hari in Nadia to fulfil that basic desire and wish of his.

At Nilachal Gour Hari, with feelings of Radharani in him, all the time went on searching her beloved Krishna and bore the brunt of anguishes of Krishna-separation.

At times Gour Hari despaired that he would never be able to see Krishna. But suddenly he remembered the scriptural teachings. Shrimad Bhagabatam declared,—one who worships Krishna through Sankirtan Jajna achieves Lord Krishna's lotus feet—

“Jajnaih Samkirtan Prayairyajanti Hi Sumedhasah.”

As soon as this sloka flashed through Prabhu's mind he became very happy and was sure that he would now be able to find Krishna.

Prabhu with a joyous heart addressed Swarup and Ray Ramananda then, and said :—

Harse Prabhu Kahe Shuno Swarup Ram Ray

Nam Sankirtan Kalou Param Upay.

“হর্ষে প্রভু কহে শুনো স্বরূপ রাম রায়

নাম সঙ্কীর্তন কলৌ পরম উপায় ।”

“Nam Sankirtan removes all the evils from the minds of the person chanting it. Nam Samkritan ensures all good things to happen, and Nam Sankirtan enables Krishna Prem-Bhaba (প্রেম-ভাব) to be aroused in the mind.” Saying these Prabhu uttered one sloka :—

Cheto-Darpana-Marjanam Bhaba-Maha-DabagniNirbapanam

Shreyah Kairab-Chandrika Bitaranam-Bidya-Badhu-Jibanam

Ananda-Ambudhi-Bardhanam Pratipadam Purna-Amrita-

Aswadanam

Sarba-Atma-Snapnam Param Bijayate Shri-Krishna-

Sankirtanam.

“চেতো দর্পণ-মার্জনং ভবমহাদাবাগ্নিনির্বাণং

শ্রেয়ঃ কৈরবচন্দ্রিকাবিতরণম্ বিদ্যাবধূজীবনম্

আনন্দাশুভিবর্ধনং প্রতিপাদং পূর্ণমুতসাদনমং
সবাস্ত্রপনং পদং বিজয়তে শ্রীকৃষ্ণদ্বীর্ভনম্ ।”

If one wants to ensure that a mirror gives a good reflected image all the time, one has to keep that mirror clean. Similarly to ensure that our mind always remains clean so that God can be perceived and His manifestations could be received by our heart and reflected therein, there exists no better way to do so than going on uttering, chanting and singing Krishna Kirtana all the time.

When a great fire erupts, it scorches everyone nearby. This life of ours in this world and particularly the domestic life and the associated relations in the human society emanates terrible heat and thus scorches and burns us also. Krishna Kirtana soothes away that heat and eliminates that burning sensation. Kumud flowers blossom only when the sky is moonlit, otherwise not. Krishna Kirtan also is that sort of moonlight, which helps all the nicest and finest flowers in our minds to blossom forth. Krishna Kirtan is the soul of true knowledge. Krishna Kirtan increases the blissful state of mind, and each of the alphabets of the Krishna Kirtan enables one to taste and appreciate the life's ambrosia. It embalms the soul. Krishna Kirtan is thus more glorious than any other means and path.

Shri Hari is called by all sorts of name. According to one's set up and bent of mind one particular name of Shri Hari is dear to one. Shri Hari has however endowed all His powers in all those names by which people generally address Him. No rules are to be observed to utter and chant His name. There also need not be any particular period of time to be assigned to utter His name. Any time, any moment, any place is most suitable to utter and chant Shri Hari-Nam. Whether one is in a so-called sanctified state of the body or not, whether he is sitting, standing or lying in bed, any place, any state of mind

and body does not prevent any one from uttering Shri Hari's name.

Prabhu lamented in deep humility that despite such an easy way of achieving Krishna, the living entities are not attracted to even utter Shri Hari's name, and achieve Him thus so easily.

Mahaprabhu not only explained what Shri Hari Nam and its powers were, but he also advised us how to get all the results that could be achieved by uttering Shri Hari Nam. Mahaprabhu recited one sloka to Swarup Damodar—

Trinadapi Sunichen Taroriba Sahishnuna

Amanina Manaden Kirtaniyah Sada Harih.

If one has to achieve all the results in totality that the chanting of Shri Harinam could render, then one has to be the most humble, one must bear all the difficulties placed in one's life as a tree does, one must not crave at all for personal recognition but one must revere and respect others instead all the time and one must all the time go on chanting and uttering Krishna's name.

In this world, we all are craving for materialistic prosperity, wealth and we acquire such possessions or try to acquire those things, considering those being the best things in life. We feel that these would bring us happiness and it is by these things alone that one's worth in this life is to be measured. In other words, how much materialistic wealth one has is the yardstick of one's intrinsic worth and success in life. Alas, that is a totally false conception. It is not true. Mahaprabhu taught us that how much devotion one has for Krishna, how much selfless love one acquires being devoted to Krishna, is the ONLY yardstick by which one's REAL worth in life on this earth is to be measured. In fact one who has not possessed this devotion, this Love for Krishna, is POOR. He is living a life of POVERTY. One must pray to Krishna to be

awarded this Love for Him and particularly this selfless devotion for Him, the desire to utter and chant His name. Without having achieved this, our life is worthless.

To Krishna we should all pray to be given pristine love, which would ensure that as soon as we utter His name, our eyes at once would be flooded with tears of joy, our throat would get choked in ecstasy, and our body would be flooded with tremors of love

In his Gambhira, Mahaprabhu showed us what intensity of love he had for Krishna. All the time he was seized with only one wish, only one desire, that is when and how he could be with Krishna. The anguish of Krishna separation drove him mad. He raved. He inflicted wounds on himself. He had no sense of what he was doing, where he was going and what pains he was suffering to be near his beloved Krishna. His world was only Krishna and nothing but Krishna.

At the peak of his Krishna-separation feelings, he even felt that the 'Sakhis' of Shri Radhika were advising him to forget the cruel, heartless Krishna, who had no feelings for Radha. They advised Prabhu to leave Krishna for ever. In reply to their advice, Mahaprabhu said :

Aslishya Ba Padaratam Pinastum-
Darshanamnarahatam Korotu Ba
Jatha Tatha Ba Bidadhatu Lampatha
Mat Pranathastu Sa Abo Naparah.

“আশ্লিষ্য বা পাদরতাং পিনষ্টুম্
দর্শনান্নরহতাং করোতু বা
যথা তথা বা বিদধাতু-লম্পটঃ
মৎ প্রাণনাথস্ত স এব নাপরঃ ।”

This sloka's reflex prototype is Mahabhabamayee Shri Shri Radha Thakurani herself. As Shri Gour Hari was no one else than Brajanandana Shri Krishna Himself Who was completely engulfed in the Mahabhab feelings of Shri

Radharani—that is why Gouranga Sundar could utter such words.

To this world Gourhari divulged the deepest Premā feelings which Shri Radharani had for her beloved Krishna. It is Mahabhabamayee Shri Shri Radharani only who could thus declare :—

“I am the servant at the lotus feet of Shri Krishna. Whether He embraces me and thus makes me His own, or by not allowing me to meet Him He thus plunges me into the slow fire burning my body and soul, or whether He roams about hither and thither and goes around for pleasures with any one else, does not MATTER to me. I never contemplate on such things. My only thought and contemplation is that He alone is my Prana-Nath (প্রাণ-নাথ) and no one else usurps that place in my heart.” This is the highest expression of pristine love. And Gourhari was always engrossed in such Prem, and in that state of mind Gouranga Mahaprabhu searched for his beloved Krishna all the time.

By his own life Mahaprabhu has taught us what we all should do to get Krishna, the Supreme Concentrated Bliss.

Though Mahaprabhu was immersed totally in realising and appreciating the feelings of Braja Ras (ব্রজ-রস), yet he never forgot for a single moment his mother Sachi Devi and his birth-place Nadia. Shri Gourhari was the ideal of a son's love for his mother. Every year Prabhu Gouranga Sundar directed Jagadananda to go to Nabadwip. The hidden reason for that was to send his silent message of love to his mother through Jagadananda and to assure her that all was well with son at her Nilachal for whom she was dying a slow death because of separation due to his having renounced the domestic life.

Mahaprabhu himself told Jagadnanda, “Go to Nabadwip. Give my pranams to her. On my behalf you prostrate before

my mother, touch her lotus-feet and tell her that whom you daily reminisce over, he actually comes every day to your place and goes back again after worshipping your lotus feet. The day you wish and desire to feed him, he arrives and takes all that you offer him to eat." Jagadanada, tell my mother that I eat so much of the food cooked by my mother to my heart's content that returning to Puri I cannot eat any more that day."

"Please tell my mother that instead of devoting my entire time and energy on serving her, I have become a Sannyasi, I have become a 'Baul'. I have deviated from my own 'Dharma'. Kindly beg of her not to take any offence for this great sin of mine. Tell her, please, that I am always at her service and her command over-rules everything. Because she ordered me, that is why I am staying at Puridham, and so I shall stay at Puri as long as I live."

Through Jagannath Pundit, Mahaprabhu used to send fine clothes to his mother. Lord Jagannath's Mahaprasadam was also specifically brought from the temple to be sent to her by Mahaprabhu. Of course, Mahaprasadam was sent for other devotees of Nabadwip too ; but for his mother this was sent with a certain special and tender care, and with a deep touch of love that only a son could do for his beloved and most respected mother. Jagadananda, when he went to Nabadwip once every year, used to tell Sachimata all what Prabhu told him to tell her. Jagadananda told Sachimata, "Prabhu often does not take the food we give him at Puri. He says, "Today I have eaten up to my throat the delicious dishes cooked for me by my mother. I go to Nadia and take the food. I go there myself, but my mother seeing me thinks she is just dreaming !" Sachimata, only after hearing those words from Jagadananda, could believe that what she saw was real. She was then overwhelmed with joy, getting the proof of his son's deep love for her.

At Nabadwip whenever Jagadananda went from Puri, he spent his entire time sitting beside, Sachimata, narrating all the 'Lila Khelas' (লীলা-খেলা) of Gouranga Sundar. Mother Sachi, for the time being, forgot her sorrow of separation from her darling Nemai. And that was why every year Prabhu sent Jagadananda regularly to Nabadwip. It was Prabhu's own way of showing to the whole world that a mother is above everything.

By this Mahaprabhu again taught us what "Batsalya-Ras" is and what a son's duty towards his mother must be.



RIDDLE SENT BY ADWAITA

Jagadananda, whenever he went to Nadia, also used to meet Adwaita Acharya. That time, in about 1455 or 1456 Bengali Saka year, when Jagadananda met Adwaita at Nabadwip, Acharya the for the first time sent a riddle-like Sloka through Jagadananda to Puri for Mahaprabhu.

The sloka was full of riddles and read thus :—

Baulke Kahio Lok Hailo Aul
 Baulke Kahio Hatè Na Bikay Chaul
 Baulke Kahio Kaje Nahiko Aul
 Baulke Kahio Iha Kahiache Baul.

“বাউলকে কহিও লোক হইলো আউল
 বাউলকে কহিও হাটে না বিকায় চাউল

বাউলকে কহিও কাজে নাহিকো আউল
বাউলকে কহিও ইহা কহিয়াছে বাউল ।”

Hearing this Tarja from the mouth of Adwaita Jagadananda laughed. It is, however, doubtful whether Jagadananda could understand its real, hidden meaning. After his return Jagadananda transmitted this Tarja (তরঙ্গ) to Prabhu. Mahaprabhu listened to it and gave an angelic smile. Suddenly Prabhu exclaimed, “That is his command !”

What really Adwaita’s message was to Mahaprabhu ? Did he pray to Prabhu to depart ? Swarup Damodar hearing the Tarja sent by Adwaita to Prabhu and Prabhu’s comments on that Tarja asked Prabhu what really was that Tarja’s message. Prabhu replied, “Acharya is the best of the worshippers of God. He is also very conversant with all the rites and rituals of all the scriptures. To worship God, God has to be evoked first. Again after God’s worship is over, God’s Bisharjan (বিশর্জন) has to be given.” But Prabhu immediately added, “But exactly what this Tarja really means, I too am not able to understand. Only Mahajogeshwar Adwaita Acharya himself is able to compose such Tarjas. What this Tarja tries to tell, I do not understand.”

All the devotees were surprised hearing Prabhu’s reply. Swarup-Damodar became disconcerted. From that day the anguish that Prabhu was suffering because of his still being separate from Krishna, intensified many times.



*APRAKAT LILA (অপ্রকট লীলা) OF SHRI
SHRI GOUR SUNDAR*

Frankly speaking, these Lilas have neither a beginning nor an end. According to the Vedas, these may better be named as Arrivals and Departures.

A Sab Lilar Kabhu Nahi Parichhed
Abirbhab Tirobhab Matra Kahe Ved.

‘এ সব লীলার কভু নাহি পরিচ্ছেদ
আবির্ভাব তিরোভাব মাত্র কহে বেদ ॥’

Shri Gour Hari descended amongst us in the Purnima Tithi of 1407 Saka in the month of Phalgun. He became a Sannyasi in 1431 Saka in the month of Magh on the Uttarayan Sankranti day. He disappeared from our midst in 1455 Saka, in the month of Ashadha, on the Saptami Tithi. His Lila life covered a span of only forty-seven years and four months. Some, however, say that it was one year more than that.

Shri Gour Hari used to go to the Puri temple every day to see Lord Jagannath. That day too he started for the Puri temple. He left Kashi Mishra's house and arriving at the temple's inner sanctum looked at the Shri Badan of Lord Jagannath and immediately all the doors leading to the inner sanctum and the main temple room and inside shut themselves of their own. Why this happened ? Lord's wish was the only reason for it.

Oh ! While looking at the lotus-face of Lord Jagannath, Prabhu exhaled deeply and uttered,

Kripa Karo Jagannath Patit Paban
Kalijuga Ailo Ei Dehoto Sharan

“কুপা কর জগন্নাথ পতিত পাবন
কলিযুগ আইল এই দেহত শরণ ॥”

Just saying these words, Gouranga Mahaprabhu embraced Lord Jagannath deeply and he dissolved into the Shri Bigraha of Lord Jagannath.

E Bol Bolia Sei Tri-Jagat Rai,
Bahu Bhidi Alingan Tulilo Hiaya,
Tritiya Prahar Bela Rabibar Dine,
Jagannathe Leen Prabhu Hailo Apane.

“এ বোল বলিয়া সেই ত্রিজগত রায় ।
বাহু ভিড়ি আলিঙ্গন তুলিলো ত্রিয়ার ॥
তৃতীয় প্রহর বেলা রবিবার দিনে ।
জগন্নাথে লীন প্রভু হইলো আপনে ॥”

Among the authors who had depicted the Lila of Mahaprabhu, it is only Shri Lochandas who has described this “Aprakat Lila” of Prabhu in the last chapter of his book “Shri Chaitanya Mangal” (শ্রীচৈতন্য মঙ্গল).

If that day was the Saptami Tithi of the month of Ashadha (আষাঢ় মাসের সপ্তমী তিথি), then it is most likely that Lord Jagannath on that day was in the Gundicha temple. If it was the ‘saptami’ after the second RathaJatra day then Jagannath Deb definitely was at the Gundicha Mandir.

If this is true, then the MAHA MILAN (মহামিলন) between the Achal and the Sachal (অচল এবং সচল)—the stationary and the moving—PURUSOTTAM (পুরুষোত্তম) took place inside the GUNDICHA temple itself ; there is no doubt about that, and Shri Lochan Dasji’s description also points to that.

“Gunja Bari Madhye Prabhu Hailo Adarshan.”

“গুঞ্জা বাড়ী মধ্যে প্রভু হৈল অদর্শন ।”

Shri Lochan Das also mentioned about a person who was an eye witness to this “Maha-Milan Lila”. A priest was present that day at the Gunja house. He witnessed this Maha Milan Lila.

Gunja Barite Chilo Panda Je Brahman
Sakshaat Dekhilo Gour Prabhur Milan.

“ঙঞ্জা বাড়ীতে ছিলো পাণ্ডা যে ব্রাহ্মণ,
সাক্ষাৎ দেখিলো গৌর প্রভুর মিলন।”

When the temple doors shut from inside out of their own volition, the devotees who could not enter and remained cut-off outside, had also seen that Brahmin priest. They requested that priest,—

Bipre Dekhi Bhakta Kahe Shunaho Padicha
Ghuchaho Kapat Prabhu Dekhite Bado Ichcha.

“বিপ্রে দেখি ভক্ত কহে শুনহ পড়িছা।

ঘুচাহ কপাট প্রভু দেখিতে বড় ইচ্ছা ॥”

The priest opened the temple door, being pressed by devotees to do so. The priest narrated to them all that had happened inside and what he saw with his own eyes and affirmed his narration by saying, “Nischaya Karia Kahi Shuno Bhaktagan”—নিশ্চয় করিয়া কহি শুনো ভক্তগণ।

After this no doubts exist. We only ponder about one thing which perplexes us. The Bigraha of Lord Jagannath (জগন্নাথের শ্রীদেহখানি) into which Prabhu Gouranga Sundar vanished and dissolved himself—why Raja Pratap Rudra did not give specific instructions to keep that Bigraha carefully preserved and not to destroy that Bigraha when the NABA KALEBAR (নব-কলেবর) ceremony of Daru Brahma (দারুব্রহ্ম) took place. If Raja had so ordained then today we, the unfortunate ones, could have at least got our hearts filled by seeing and touching that very Shri Bigraha.

Shri Shri Prabhu Jagad-Bandhu Sundar made pilgrimages to almost all Tirthas of India. But he never visited Puri Dham. On being asked the reasons for it, Prabhu Jagad-Bandhu Sundar very gravely replied :—

“Okhane Gele E Deho Gale Jabe Re.”

“ওখানে গেলে এ দেহ গলে যাবে রে।”

(If I visit that place my body will just get dissolved)

This uttering of Jagad-Bandhu Sundar also renders authenticity to Lochan Dasji's 'Maha-Milan' story.

By vanishing into Lord Jagannath, Gouranga Sundar enabled the devotees to appreciate and realise fully about the Purusottama of the Brajadham and His Lilas, and simultaneously the 'Milan-Madhurima' (মিলন-মাধুরিমা) and the Lilas of the Purusottama of Nadia.

The question now arises what happened to Mahprabhu's devotees after Mahaprabhu disappeared from their midst ? They pined for their darling Gouranga Sundar and waned away daily. The tears shed by them were like rains falling in the month of Shrabana. They raved and spoke incoherently, as all the time they were thinking only about their darling Nemai Chand.

Poet Karnapur gave a beautiful description of the condition of Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar's devotees during that time.

Ha Gouranga Priyatama Ha Ha Ha Prabho Dinabandho,
Ha Ha Kastang Nija-Dhan-Jan-Pran-Jati-Swarup.

~ Ithham Bhuah Karun-Karunah-Krandatam Bak-

Prabandhaschittam

Bhittiropitch Shatadha Hanta Saghah Karoti

হা-গৌরান্দ প্রিয়তম হা-হা-হা প্রভো দীনবন্ধো

হা-হা-কষ্টে নিজ-ধন-জন-প্রাণ-জাতি-স্বরূপ ।

ইথং-ভূয়ঃ করুণ-করুণঃ ক্রন্দতাং বাক্-প্রবন্ধশ্চিত্তং

ভিত্তীরপিচ শতধা হন্ত সঘঃ করোতি ॥ ১।১৫।

With this note of heart-rending cries of anguish of Gour Parshadas (গৌর পার্শদ) we leave our readers to contemplate on what jewel of the crown Bengal's Gouranga Mahaprabhu was, and with what simplicity and deepest love for humanity Mahaprabhu Gouranga Sundar broke all the barriers of caste, creed or race and established the Doctrine of Love over ritualistic, conservative ways of worshipping God. For

Gouranga Mahaprabhu the only criterion of humanity was whether he loves God and thus loves and serves the humanity.

Though Gouranga Sundar himself became a Sannyasi, yet by sending Abadhut Nityananda back to the Garhastya-Ashram Prabhu proved to the people like us that even leading normal domestic life but correctly, that is by chanting Harinam all the time while carrying out our daily chores, and doing every thing in our life always believing firmly that we are Krishna-Das (कृष्णदास), we can achieve the lotus-feet of Shri Krishna. Mahaprabhu made a beautiful synthesis of Monism, Naba Nyaya, Smriti, Tantra and the Shrutis of Indian culture and heritage.

After having tried to sketch out briefly Mahaprabhu's life-history which is as fathomless as an ocean we now turn to outline his philosophy of life.



THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU

Mahaprabhu Shri Krishna Chaitanya was not a philosopher in the sense that Shankara, Ramanuja, Kant, Hegel are philosophers.

Philosophers, as we call them, generally deal with Metaphysics, Cosmology, Ethics, Psychology—this sort of universal subjects. Their discussions are logical, systematic and sometimes even polemic. They try to bring out a consistency within the subjects they deal with.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, however, was nothing of that sort. What to speak of philosophy, he hardly penned even a single line on any subject whatsoever. He left no writings for posterity. Nevertheless, he is to be considered a philosopher of the highest order.

By his actions, deeds and his blissful deep spiritual living he trail-blazed the highest order of philosophy throughout his whole life. Each and every word uttered by him was pregnant with the highest philosophical meanings. The instructions he gave others were all based on the profoundest metaphysics—they were logical, coherent and consistent. The underlying philosophy of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's life and teachings was brought to light by six of his most eminent devotees—generally known as the “Chhaya Goswami-s” (six erudite scholarly apostles).

The “Upanisads” which embody the intuitive realisation of our ancient “Rishis” (Seers), constitute the essential philosophy of the Indian thinkers, the endless verities of Upanisadic thought were systematised in five hundred aphorisms by one “Badarayana” of inestimable talent and insight. This collection is called the “BRAHMA-SUTRAS”. Great Indian thinkers like Shankara, Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Madhva and Ballava all wrote elaborate commentaries on those aphorisms. Different commentators gave different interpretations because of their individual intuitive and environmental personal experiences. Thus came into existence five different systems or schools of one and the same truth, i.e. of the Brahma Sutras (Vedantic Sutras).

These five systems are styled as : ADWAITABAD—the absolute monism of Shankara ; BISHISTA-ADWAITABAD of Ramanuja, BHED-ABHED—the monistic dualism of Nimbarka ; DWAITABAD—the dualism of Madhwa and SUDDHA-ADWAITABAD, the pure monism of Ballabha.

Shri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu shines singly with his ACHINTYA-BHED—ABHED—Diversity in unity and identity. This was interpreted logically and established by Shri Jiva Goswami and Baladeva Vidyabhusan after Chaitanya Mahaprabhu disappeared from our mundane world.



THE ACHINTYA BHED-ABHED PHILOSOPHY OF MAHAPRABHU

The analysis of this system brings out clearly two principal modes of approach towards the Supreme Reality—one through pure Jnan (knowledge) and the other through the purest Bhakti (Devotion). The path of knowledge aims at trying to know perfectly the Reality through identity with Him, whereas the approach of devotion leads to the dedicated service of the Supreme Reality. The followers of the Jnana path (knowledge mode) are called “Jnanis”. Shankara stands out as the highest amongst the Jnanis. Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Madhwa and Ballabha are all Bhaktas (Devotees). Chaitanya Mahaprabhu can be regarded as the king in the realm of Bhaktas. Truly speaking, He is God Himself in the garb of a Bhakta.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JNAN AND BHAKTI

The difference between the Jnanis and the Bhaktas hinges mainly on the very essential view-point whether the process on action is compatible with Absolute REALITY or not.

Mahaprabhu answers in the positive, whereas Shankara does otherwise.

One has to understand the point at issue clearly and the reason for opposite attitudes should also be appreciated cogently. Both the groups of Jnanis and Bhaktas uphold the view that Supreme Reality is the reality of perfection. The question now is whether perfection and action are coherent or incoherent.

Does Reality sustain process? Shankara thinks, it does not, because it cannot. Action entails motion which necessarily implies imperfection; hence action and therefore any process is incompatible with the Reality of Perfection. Reality, therefore is static and processless. No function of any "Shakti" (action), force (energy) whatsoever is possible in "BRAHMA". "Brahma" is Nishaktika (without any action). This is the contention of Shankara.

Mahaprabhu, on the other hand, maintains that REALITY is not static. Process is not incoherent with perfection. In spite of perfection, REALITY is Eternity in motion. He is evergrowing, ever-renewing Himself and realising Himself through His limitless existence. This realisation implies self-consciousness. Complete consciousness of fathomless existence for eternity does result in a profound blissfulness. Process in Reality is delightful activity in BRAHMA. It is called LILA (The Sport of the Lord). Lila consists of the process of

spiritual continuity which is not only consistent with reality but also indispensable for the Absolute being, i.e. dynamic and never-ending. BRAHMA, as envisaged by Mahaprabhu, is a dynamic personality, the only 'Purusa' (male), Shri Krishna. Shri Krishna is the source and eternal abode of unbounded "Shakti", which is as real as Himself. Shakti is Krishna's Shakti and dependent on Him. Shakti and Shaktiman being identical, they are one and indivisible. Creation means the manifestation of His Shakti and therefore is real.

The subjective Shakti is identical with Shri Krishna. The sweetness and charm of His eternal Lila is being enacted and occasionally it is staged in this mortal sphere by dint of His subjective energy. The personified embodiment of this delightful Shakti is Shri Radhika, the Reflex self of Shri Krishna.

The objective Shakti is the agent responsible for the manifestation of this vast panorama, called the Universe. It is the transformation of the creative energy of Brahma working objectively. Unlike a potter, who creates a pot out of clay, Brahma creates the universe out of His own self, like a spider that weaves its web manufacturing the thread out of itself. Brahma is not only the form-giver but also is the ingredient, the material cause of the Universe. Due to this fact He is the component part and the indwelling spirit simultaneously. The energy involved in this huge universe is the "Bahiranga" or the objective shakti of Shri Krishna.

His "Tatastha" Shakti (the intermediate energy) is in fact the "JIVA-SHAKTI". All the individual selves are indeed conscious particles of the one all-absorbing Reality. Their relationship resembles a wide-spread fire and a tiny spark out of it, or the glorious Sun and its proton light particle. Every Jiva is an eternal partner in His Lila life.

The Jiva or individual self is called intermediary Shakti, because he stands at the cross-roads. He may turn his back from

Krishna, recede and dive into the Labryinth of changeableness of the objective world and thus suffer untold miseries ; or he may advance towards Krishna and His subjective Shaktis and join the love-life of His eternal sport and enjoy happiness of the highest order.

The method of attaining the highest "beatitude" in life is different for the Jnanis and the Bhaktas. For Shankar, knowledge is the path and it entails no process. Nothing is to be done, for no action can bring realisation of the Supreme God. Knowledge means the knowledge of identity with that Supreme Reality. One must consistently meditate on his identity with the Brahma and this will result in the realisation. There is no stage or gradual steppings. The attainment of identity is no attainment at all. It is to discover what one really is. Emancipation (Moksha) means finding one's own self. This is the contention of Jnanis.

The devotional path consists, however, of service, worship, contemplation and dedication. By total self-commitment to the will of Krishna, the devotee gradually approaches his goal, which finds its manifestation in an all giving love for God and dedicated service to mankind.

In certain respects the devotee is similar to Brahma and in other respects he is different. In essence, they are the same, both are "Sat", "Chit" and "Ananda". But Brahma is a conflagration whereas the Jiva (monad) is a tiny spark. This relationship is called, "Bhed-abhed" i e. identity in difference.

In conclusion, one word of great importance may be said. Non-dualism, dualism and the many other "Isms" of such seers are theories only. But the "Bhed-abhed", of Mahaprabhu is not a theory but an embodied truth in the person of Mahaprabhu Himself.

In Him, Shri Radhika and Shri Krishna are united and They have become one entity. An intense, incomprehensible love has

obliterated their individual identities and unified them completely in one personality. This exemplifies Identity. But again in Him Shri Radhika is longing for Lord Krishna and at the same time Krishna for Radha. Their crying for each other is heart-rending and deeply afflictive. This shows the presence of difference. Thus the theory of identity-in-difference has become a living personality. Unification of opposites is not illogical, it is supra-logical or rather mystical. 2

The word 'Achintya' means something which surpasses understanding and is hence inexplicable or mystical. "Achintya Bhed-abhed" signifies mystical identity-in-difference.

Modern science recognises the process correctly, but fails to see the underlying Reality that upholds the process. Shankaracharya rightly hangs on to the august Reality but fails to see the process that makes Reality concrete and living.

Mahaprabhu brings forth a synthesis in the recognition of the Reality in process and the process in Reality. This synthesis will throw a flood of light on the Indian culture in its true perspective. This is why PRABHU JAGADBANDHU, an embodiment of this synthesis upholds MAHAPRABHU as the LIGHT-HOUSE of Indian thought throughout the centuries.

Philosophy as we have said earlier, is preeminently an intellectual exercise. It is rational and therefore logical. There is another aspect of Chaitanya's philosophy which is essentially mystical. Mysticism transcends logic because God is supra-logical, but never illogical. This mystical aspect is termed "Rasa-tattva".



RASA-TATTVA

The most unique and significant feature which constitutes the mystical aspect of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu consists in the Rasa-Tattva. "Rasa" (Inner significance) cannot be translated. It has a long history in the Hindu thought, in use since the Upanisadic days, but in the Vaishnava literature the use of 'Rasa' is a bit peculiar and has become a technical terminology of the greatest importance. We shall try to elucidate its significance as far as possible.

"Rasa" means "Relishable flavour". When a thing is pleasurable or enjoyable, it is said to possess "Rasa". That which accounts for the pleasurable nature of an object is called 'Rasa'. The rhetoricians use this term in connection with poetry and music. Poetry is defined as "the aggregate of sentences whose soul is 'rasa'". Music is rhythmical sounds having 'rasa'. The Hindu Chemistry and Medical Sciences made striking uses of this 'rasa' concept. In Taittiriya 'Upanisad' we find 'rasa' used as a substance and equated with God. However, it makes no difference whether 'rasa' is an attribute or substance in the case of God, since in Him they are identical.

All "rasas" are said to be the "rasa" of God. It is God in an object that makes that object pleasurable.

As life implies joy, and joy implies life, Hindu philosophy has very appropriately hit upon the single expression 'rasa' to denote both phases of the same thing. 'Rasa' is the vital essence of everything that lives and grows. It is the principle of joy that stands for life and expansion of the soul. When the Upanisads speak of the highest principles as 'rasa', they speak of the one

embodiment of all life and all joy. Trace the essence of existence from the lowest to the highest and you would come then to the 'fountain-head' which is "rasa". Trace the essence of joy from the grossest to the finest and you can then grasp the eternal source of 'rasa'.

Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu calls the 'God-head'—"Premamaya-Rasa-Raj"—the embodiment of love and the king of "rasa". Love and joy are said to be two aspects of one essence which is "rasa". Rasa is called the quintessence of consciousness and the Lord is "concentrated rasa" (Rasa-ghana). It has been said that the Supreme God-head has a body, but though its structure and shape are like those of the human body its component stuff is different. Now we have the component stuff. 'Rasa' is the content of His body. It is all "rasa" and nothing but "rasa". Every part of His body is made of "rasa"—"akhila rasa-amrita-murti" (অখিল-রসামৃত-মূর্তি). If "rasa" is taken as the quintessence of consciousness, a new light is thrown on the idea of the Lord having a body. In spite of all that has been said about the Supreme-Being having a body we cannot help thinking that the notion is not-philosophical and perhaps reminiscent of primitive idolatry. But now with the concept of "rasa" as the quintessence of consciousness this notion of a Divine Body is rendered more intelligible and an attempt can be made to place this on a philosophical basis. We have all along seen that for a Vedantist it is consciousness which is the fundamental substance of the Universe and 'Rasa' is said to be the quintessence of consciousness.

Now let us discuss what the precise character the Lila—eternal sport—of the King of Rasa has. The enjoyment of Love in its truest sense conveys the need of a companion. In order to become Himself in the fullest sense, the Lord has to create His associates.

"Unity, even at the very root, chooses to show itself in

variety". That is the essence of the doctrine of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

The Lord and His primary power (Antaranga Shakti) has been spoken of as non-different. Now it is said that He separates Himself from His primary power, i.e. He divides Himself into two—the Being for self and the Being for expression. The former is He Himself and is Krishna—the one who attracts; and the latter is His primary power termed "Radha"—one who adores.

Radha means adoration of Love-devotion. Radha is the embodied manifestation of Krishna's Love-principle, the energy of His soul. She is the principle in Krishna which sets His Love into motion.

Radha and Krishna are identical in Reality, even though a concrete realisation of Love demands an apparent difference between them. The "Being for self" Krishna is the charming embodiment and agent of the most Supreme delight, and the "Being for expression" (Radha) is the inner essence and creator of the rhythm of that love-life.

So that the Lord may enjoy Himself, Radha assumes different stages of the love relation and appears before Him variously. When Radha (the primary power) serves as a servant, Krishna—the Lord is Master. When this primary power loves as a friend—the Lord—is the friend. When this power (Aparupa-Shakti) caresses as a mother—the Lord is the child. Lastly, when 'Radha' endears as a wife the Lord is the beloved.

The sweetness of Love increases as this progresses from servant-Master relationship through friendship, mother-child relationship finally culminating in wife and beloved relationship. The "Being for expression" which is Radha thus approaches closer and closer to the "Being for self", i.e. Krishna, and ultimately both become united again. When this unification takes place, 'God-head' becomes more enriched

and more sweet. This is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the spiritual fusion of the "Being for expression" and the Being for self, that is both Radha and Krishna. Radha—the Antithesis of Krishna and Krishna found their final synthesis in Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This is the spiritual dialectic of Love.

The philosophy of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, therefore, peculiarly finds its culmination in His very personality. Nowhere under this Sun could one find a singular personality identical with the essence of His own philosophy, who is none other than Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Although this is rather a strange phenomenon yet it is essentially true and a fact in our own human history.



SUMMUM BONUM OF LIFE

The highest objective of human life, *Summum, Bonum* is called "Sadhya"—that which is to be achieved. The ways and means to achieve this object are termed "Sadhana". This terminology was found originally in the "Nyaya Shastra" (Logic). In the inference, "there is fire on the mountain because of the presence of smoke", the fire is called "Sadhya" and the smoke is called "Sadhan".

"Sadhya" and "Sadhan" as used by Mahaprabhu, however, are of the profoundest significance.

The Supreme objective of human pursuits—the terminus

of one's life's journey is called "Sadhya" and the ways and means to achieve this end are termed "Sadhana".

Mahaprabhu held a very delightful discussion with Ray Ramananda on this very subject. Ray Ramananda was a respectable scholarly land-lord of Vidyanagar, a town on the bank of the river Godavari—in present day Andhra Pradesh of southern India. Mahaprabhu travelled from Puri for more than a year extensively through Southern India for the propagation of Krishna consciousness and had reached Vidyanagar on that sojourn.

Mahaprabhu requested Ramananda to cite a quotation from the Shastras that speak of the highest good for the human life. Mahaprabhu desired Ramananda to explain his realisations of the Summum-bonum of life sanctified by the Shastras.

Ramananda started elaborating. He said first that every person in human society must perform his own duties as enjoined by the Shastras. Mahaprabhu said, "This is superficial and is not the true essence of life. Hence please proceed further." Ramananda then mentioned that offering the fruits of all actions at the Lord's feet—"Sarba-Karma-Arpana" is the ethical summum-bonum. Mahaprabhu opined that this was also superficial and asked Ramananda to delve deeper. Now Ramananda elaborated on self commitment, that is to love the Lord whole-heartedly as a mother loves her child, or as a friend loves his playmate and go forth and finally propounded that the summum-bonum of life is to love the Lord as a lover loves his or her beloved one.

Mahaprabhu accepted this as the "Sadhya". He opined that the highest attainment of human life is to love Krishna as the dearest one. Although nothing is superior to this, yet Mahaprabhu prodded Ramananda to delve further. Ramananda entreated that without the grace or "Kripa" of Mahaprabhu, he could not think or express anything superior to that just now told by him.

All of a sudden Ramananda felt a new urge and resumed his discourse. He now said that the all-effacing love of Shri Radha for Lord Shri Krishna is undoubtedly the supreme end of the spiritual pursuit. Radha's loving surrender entailing total effacement of self, is love in its pristine form and is termed "Mahabhava". The inevitable consequence of "Mahabhava" is the attainment of Shri Krishna in the fullest sense of the term. Realisation of the Supreme Being Krishna in all respects is thus the spiritual summum-bonum of human life.

Radha and Krishna fulfil each other mutually and a devotee realises his fullest self in and through his self-forgetting fondness for Radha. Deep friendly feeling for Radha only enables one to enjoy all the sweetness of Shri Krishna.

Mahaprabhu accepted "Radha-Prema", that is love of Radha for Krishna, as the *supranal*, the highest stage to be reached. This is the acme, the zenith of perfection for all persons. This is the "Sadhya-Shiromoni"—Crown-jewel of consummated spiritual excellence. This was the final presentation of Ramananda in the discourse to Mahaprabhu.

To impart this highest excellence of "Radha Prem" to all mankind Mahaprabhu had descended on this mundane world from His heavenly abode. Prior to Him no one had given a hint even of this "Sadhya-Siromoni." Mahaprabhu was not only the messenger but also the magnanimous distributor of this highest excellence, the Pristine Love.

We shall now attempt to describe whence he brought it and how he became the best propagator of this supreme wealth.

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Ramananda started elaborating. He said first that every person in human society must perform his own duties as enjoined by the Shastras. Mahaprabhu said, "This is superficial and is not the true essence of life. Hence please proceed further." Ramananda then mentioned that offering the fruits of all actions at the Lord's feet—"Sarba-Karma-Arpana" is the ethical summum-bonum. Mahaprabhu opined that this was also superficial and asked Ramananda to delve deeper. Now Ramananda elaborated on self commitment, that is to love the Lord whole-heartedly as a mother loves her child, or as a friend loves his playmate and go forth and finally propounded that the summum-bonum of life is to love the Lord as a lover loves his or her beloved one.

Mahaprabhu accepted this as the "Sadhya". He opined that the highest attainment of human life is to love Krishna as the dearest one. Although nothing is superior to this, yet Mahaprabhu prodded Ramananda to delve further. Ramananda entreated that without the grace or "Kripa" of Mahaprabhu, he could not think or express anything superior to that just now told by him.

All of a sudden Ramananda felt a new urge and resumed his discourse. He now said that the all-effacing love of Shri Radha for Lord Shri Krishna is undoubtedly the supreme end of the spiritual pursuit. Radha's loving surrender entailing total effacement of self, is love in its pristine form and is termed "Mahabhava". The inevitable consequence of "Mahabhava" is the attainment of Shri Krishna in the fullest sense of the term. Realisation of the Supreme Being Krishna in all respects is thus the spiritual summum-bonum of human life.

Radha and Krishna fulfil each other mutually and a devotee realises his fullest self in and through his self-forgetting fondness for Radha. Deep friendly feeling for Radha only enables one to enjoy all the sweetness of Shri Krishna.

Mahaprabhu accepted "Radha-Prema", that is love of Radha for Krishna, as the *supranal*, the highest stage to be reached. This is the acme, the zenith of perfection for all persons. This is the "Sadhya-Shiromoni"—Crown-jewel of consummated spiritual excellence. This was the final presentation of Ramananda in the discourse to Mahaprabhu.

To impart this highest excellence of "Radha Prem" to all mankind Mahaprabhu had descended on this mundane world from His heavenly abode. Prior to Him no one had given a hint even of this "Sadhya-Siromoni." Mahaprabhu was not only the messenger but also the magnanimous distributor of this highest excellence, the Pristine Love.

We shall now attempt to describe whence he brought it and how he became the best propagator of this supreme wealth.

BRAHMA AND KRISHNA

Brahma is the supreme Reality of Vedanta. He is the Absolute : beyond all human language and comprehension. Brahma is without any second—He is one, unparalleled, unfathomable and hence un-usable. We cannot do anything with Brahma—not even think or hold any discourses on Him. To define Him is to defile Him, is to bring Him down from His transcendental pedestal. These are the findings of the Upanishads and the statements of the Vedantists.

Mahaprabhu told to us about Krishna. He devotedly spoke of Krishna, meditated profoundly on Krishna, loved Him deeply. He uttered Krishna's name serenely and with the deepest devotion. He sang Krishna's name, danced uttering Krishna's name. He wept profusely due to separation from Krishna. He was the staunchest and most steadfast lover of Krishna. Sri Krishna was the be-all and end-all of Mahaprabhu's life.

Who then is Krishna ? Krishna, as Mahaprabhu holds, is the Supreme Reality. Krishna is identical with Brahma and non-different from the Absolute Being. Then, are there two such Absolutes ? The answer is an emphaticy—No. That would otherwise be illogical and unmetaphysical—Brahma being accepted as one and without a second

Is there any difference then between Brahma and Krishna ? Yes. The differences as conceived by Mahaprabhu are :—

Brahma is beyond our conception,

Krishna is an object of our contemplation. Krishna is full of auspicious qualities.

Brahma is impersonal

Krishna is Superpersonal.

Brahma is the lustrous effulgence of Krishna.

All gods and goddesses are translations of Brahma. Krishna is the most perfect translation of pure Brahma in the human experience. We can talk about Krishna, meditate on Krishna, love Krishna and dedicate our lives to Him. In this universe no thing and no person parallels Krishna, not to speak of being superior to Him (asamordha). We living beings possess a mortal body and an immortal soul, but Krishna's body and soul are both immortal. They are made of "Chit"—spiritual substance. His body is the embodiment of Bliss and Love.

Krishna is sweet. Everything about Krishna is sweet. He is "rasagana"—a condensed, concentrated form of all sweetness. Devotees know Him, enjoy Him. Their delight in enjoying Him cannot be transcribed in words. Mahaprabhu calls Krishna—"Premamaya Rasaraj" (embodiment of Love and King of Rasa). Love and Rasa are said to be the two aspects of the same essence.

Rasa, as conceived by Mahaprabhu, is the quintessence of consciousness and Krishna is the concentrated Rasa (Rasaghana). Krishna is neither impersonal like Brahma, nor personal in the sense that we human beings or living entities are. He is Superpersonal. He has a form which resembles a human body but it is made of an entirely different stuff. "Rasa" is the content of His body. Krishna is All-Rasa, nothing but Rasa, and every part of His Body is made of Rasa.

All of Krishna's activities are nothing but the enjoyment of Rasa—"Kama-Kriyata."

To enjoy love in its pristine form the Supreme Lord requires a companion. To become Himself in the fullest sense Krishna creates an associate. Krishna divides Himself into two—the person for self and the person for expression. One is He

Himself i.e. Krishna and the other is the primary power (antaranga sakti) that is Radha.

Krishna is the one who attracts. Radha is the one who adores. The Love of Radha signifies "prema-bhakti", adoration or love-devotion. According to Mahaprabhu, Radha is the embodiment of Krishna's love-principle, the energy of His soul. Radha is the principle in Krishna, who sets His love in motion. Krishna enjoys Himself in and through Radha. Radha and Krishna are identical in reality. Nevertheless, a concrete realisation of love demands seeming difference between the two. Krishna is the embodiment of "Supreme-delight" and Radha is the creator of the rhythm of that Love-life.

In the Brahma of the Advaita-Vedantists, enjoyment of the essence of Love is non-existent or rather dormant (Abyakta). In Radha-Krishna the same enjoyment of supreme bliss is eternally an actuality. Love is static as well as dynamic at the same time. The static aspect is Brahma and the dynamic aspect is "Radha-Krishna". Herein lies the difference between "Brahma" and "Radha-Krishna".

At Puri Mahaprabhu had a discussion on philosophical aspects with Basudeb Sarababhauma. Basudeb was an exponent of Shankar philosophy. He used to explain Vedanta from the Advaita Vedanta point of view. Having listened silently for seven days to Basudeb's philosophical explanations, Mahaprabhu when asked by Sarababhouma whether he could understand and grasp his annotations, told Basudeb that the explanations and reflections on the main sutras of Vedavyasa as rendered by Sarababhauma seemed to be full of fallacies. "While the main sutras of Vedavyasa—as they are—are as clear and dazzling as the rising sun, the annotations made by you appear to be like a dark cloud covering the sun," Mahaprabhu said. Basudeb was stunned on hearing this. He challenged Mahaprabhu to explain the sutras. Mahaprabhu then started his own explanation of these sutras refuting the reflections

contained in Shankara's philosophy and established his own. The essence of Mahaprabhu's views as expounded on that occasion is stated below :—

Brahma is "Sat-Chit-Annanda". He is all existence" (sat) ; "all knowledge" (chit) and "all joy" (ananda). Though these three phases are indivisible, yet due to the eternal will to manifest three moments, they are distinguishable in the life of the Absolute. There can be existence without knowledge but knowledge is not possible without existence. To be joyous, an entity must exist and must be conscious of his existence. The pure existence, the root and sustainer of all existence is called "PARAM-ATMAN"—the fountain-head of all existence.

Brahma is pure consciousness, which entails existence. There is another moment beyond Brahma which is all joy. It comprehends Brahma but goes beyond it. It is called "Bhagaban Krishna." Paramatman may be called the "World-Soul". Brahma is Absolute par-excellence. Bhagaban Krishna is the "Supreme-Godhead"—the eternally perfect Absolute Person—infinite in excellence, power and sweetness. Sankara's highest Reality is Brahma or pure Consciousness, which accounts for the entire cosmic order

Bhagaban Krishna, as conceived by Mahaprabhu, is the Supreme God-head of the Supra-Cosmic plane of uninterrupted love and joy. The Supra-Cosmic life of Krishna is called "Nitya-Lila", the eternal sport. Cosmic life is 'Sristi-Lila' or creative-play. The "Lila" (sport) of Shri Krishna are spontaneous to Him, because He is full of self-bliss. His divine sport is expressed in such activities as singing, dancing and playing on His eternal flute.

Param-atman and Brahma are formless. But Bhagaban Krishna has beatific form. By the word form we mean body. Krishna, the Highest Lord, has a body as Mahaprabhu perceives it. Krishna's body is like that of a man, or rather

to put it more correctly, our human body looks like Him and not that He looks like us. The human body is said to be the imperfect copy of the most perfect Being, i.e. Krishna. The beauty and sweetness of the body of Krishna surpass all descriptions and are beyond all intellectual comprehension. This body of Krishna is made of pure consciousness—CHIT (चित्). His body is not made of any other element whatsoever. He is identical with the spirit. Just as ice is nothing but water in frozen form, so too Krishna's body is nothing but pure-consciousness and super-condensed joy. Krishna is called the embodiment of joy—a solidified bliss, "Ananda-Bigraha"—"Ananda-Ghana". Krishna's body is charmingly graceful—"Madan-Mohan". The beauty of His Body shimmers like the shifting colours and patterns of a 'Kaleidoscope' into a more and more self-entrancing loveliness at every moment. It reflects the consummated beauty and sweetness of the whole Universe. Charms of one nature compete with other types of charms for supremacy and thus in the Ocean of Love bubbles of sweetness foam and froth off. Krishna is the most perfect embodiment of "Prem Tattwa"—the Excellence of Love.



PREM-TATTWA

"Prem-Tattwa" is one of the sublimest contributions of Mahaprabau. He expressed the depth of his mind to Sanatan Goswami when he said "Prem is the substantia of highest value in this world".

We shall try to clarify this Prem-Tattwa of Mahaprabhu. 'Prem' is essentially the "Prayojan-Tattwa"—Value Theory. The word "Tattwa" means 'thatness', that is the essence of the reality, the manifestation of the universe before us. By the essence of a thing we mean the truth of its existence and its value. The most real is the most true and thus has the most value. The least real is the least true and has the least value. The standard of evaluation is "CHIT", i.e. consciousness. In this corporal material world consciousness lies dormant. In Nature, consciousness is, as it were, sleeping. The world of matter may be called the subconscious state of 'Chit'. 'Chit' exists in its fullest in the Supra-conscious state. The Supra-conscious state possesses the maximum truth and the highest value.

The entire existence is a gradual system of truth and value. Truth may be included in value. There are three ideal values : 'Satyam'—Truth ; "Sivam"—Goodness ; and "Sundaram"—Beauty. In the Supra-conscious state, these three ideal values are most completely manifested for all times. The Supra-conscious state is full of Bliss. Solidified Bliss is "Ananda" and "Prem" is the same as Ananda and Ananda is identical with Prem.

Levels of consciousness are differently conceived. They are called "Kosa" or sheaths. The outermost sheath is gross matter—'Annamaya Kosa'. The next interior sheath is the level of thought, This level is sub-divided into two sheaths—'Pranamaya Kosa' and 'Manomaya Kosa', i.e. life and mind. The third level is that of intelligence—'Vijnanamaya Kosa'. And the innermost sheath or the hard core itself is the Anandamaya Kosa, that is, Bliss solidified.

Ananda and Prem are identical. The realisation of Prem is the same as the realisation of the Supreme.

One having a genuine desire to realise Prem begins with "শ্রদ্ধা" "Shraddha", i.e. faith. It is the faith in the existence of

the Supraconscious reality and in the possibility of experiencing it. 'Sadhana'—the end of spiritual endeavour, is in the realisation of Prem, the deep experience of love of the ultimate reality. Prem being absolute, its realisation is the blissful enjoyment of the absolute Brahma. 'Shri Krishna Prem' is the 'Swarup-Shakti' of Krishna.

Prem is Krishna's 'Swarup-Shakti'. Let us try to realise what "Swarup-Shakti" is. The ultimate substance, according to Mahaprabhu, is consciousness (Chaitanya). According to Advaita-Vedanta" consciousness has no power, but Mahaprabhu holds the view that consciousness has power (Shakti).

"Ichha-Shakti" (will power) is the power of consciousness. Three kinds of will power are recognised. The will to do, the will to know and the will to-enjoy—Kriya, J. ana and Ananda. These three phases find expression in action, in knowledge, and in the joy of life.

These three modes are inseparable. To know is to exist and feel happy. To exist is to know and be happy. And to be happy is to possess knowledge and feel existence. This shows that will-power constitutes a unity. It is neither 'to do', nor 'to know', nor 'to enjoy', but all of them simultaneously. Thus unity of will power is the essential power of consciousness and this is what Chaitanya Mahaprabhu calls the "Swarupa-Shakti".

Prem is this Swarupa-Shakti. It is also called the Antaranga-Shakti or Innermost Shakti.

"Bahiranga" and "Tatashta" are the two other Shaktis of Shri Krishna. This universe is the manifestation of "Bahipanga-Shakti". "Tatashta-Shakti" lies in-between the innermost and the outermost, i.e. is intermediate between the Swarupa and "Bahiranga" shaktis.

All living entities or "Jivas" are the manifestations of the Tatashta-Shakti. The Swarupa-Shakti is the power due to the

efficacy of which Shri Krishna has His effulgent abode in Brindaban. The Bahiranga Shakti is His "Maya-Shakti". This Maya Shakti is the root-cause or source of the world of Nature. The intermediary power, otherwise called the 'radiating power' constitutes the pure essence of the atomic monads—Jivas which are also innumerable in number. This is the outline of the world-view of Mahaprabhu and 'Prem' stands at the centre of the whole system.

The Supreme-Being Shri Krishna has these three powers of consciousness fully and eternally. Each and everyone of us as an individual also possesses these powers but in infinitesimal quantity. Since every being is an infinitesimal part of the Supreme-Being, we human beings attain only the slightest glimpse of the infinite through these functions.

The "Antaranga Shakti" of our consciousness finds its full manifestation only when we act for the Infinite, know the infinite joy of the Infinite and when we are drawn towards the Infinite.

To take all these functions of ours back to the plane of infinity is the same as loving the whole, loving the infinite, which is identical with the living God-head Shri Krishna. Hence the unity of consciousness finds its genuine manifestation in the love of all, that is to say, in the love of God. It has been said that the essence of consciousness is love.

In the Sanskrit and Bengali languages there are two words for love—"Kam" and "Prem", somewhat like the Greek words 'eros' and 'agapi'. When the attachment for something finite, something material, is meant, the word 'Kam' is used. When the attachment is for the infinite it is then 'Prem'. In the English language there is only one word 'Love', hence we shall write 'LOVE' in capital letters to denote 'Prem' and in small letters *i. e.* 'love' to denote 'Kam'. "Shri Krishnadas Kaviraj, the eminent author of the book "Shri Chaitanya Charita-rita" says, "Kam is iron and Prem is gold ; Kam is dense darkness

and Prem is the dazzling Sun Kam pushes on to abject hell, whereas Prem pulls one up above to the abode of "Krishna". Prem is not only the means to an higher end, Prem itself is the end."

Since Prem is identical with Krishna, who is also called "Premaghana" *i. e.*, solidified Prem, Prem consists of two gradual stages. When it is the means for the ultimate end it is called "Sadhan-Bhakti". When it is the end in itself it is named "Para-Bhakti". "Para-Bhakti" is 'prem' par excellence. Shri Radha is called "Prem-Swarupini"—an embodiment of love. Radha is the means to the loving enjoyment of Krishna, she is the shelter, the prop to cling to

One of the main objectives of the descent of Mahaprabhu to this plane is for the propagation of the "Mahima"—excellence of Shri Radha. That Radha is identical with the 'Swarupa-Shakti' of Krishna that has already been mentoned earlier

One word more about "Swarupa-Shakti". The word has two meanings—first the Swarupa of Krishna is identical with his Shakti ; second, the Shakti that has emanated from the Swarupa of Krishna. In the first sense, Krishna and Radha are one and the same, for example, fire and its capacity to burn. These two aspects can never be separated. In the second sense, Radha is another personality who has evolved from Krishna. In this sense Radha and Krishna are two different individuals. They are then like two wicks on a single lamp. They illuminate each other and make each other's existence meaningful.

Viewed from another angle, Radha is said to be the "Pranaya-Bikriti" of Krishna. "Pranaya" is a deepened state of Love. It is a love evolute. Love is called "Pranaya" when the lover and the beloved are transformed by the power of love to such an extent that it makes them almost identical. The term "Bikriti" signifies transformation. Radha is an emblem of transformed love matured to its extreme.

Radha is Radha in and through the personality of Krishna, and similarly Krishna is Krishna in and through the existence of Radha, just in the way that eyes function because there is light and light continues to be light as long as eyes can perceive it. This is what it is meant by "Pranaya-Bikriti". There is no way to differentiate as to who is the lover and who is the beloved (Raman and Ramani). Radha and Krishna are the most real illustrations of the philosopher's ideology—"identity-in-difference" (Bhed-Abhed). When somehow their differences are obliterated the result is the most celebrated personality of Shri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who himself embodies the two in one. How this ideal became actual we shall now try to explain.

The "Para-Brahma", Shri Krishna, is an eternally realised being, but nevertheless he has his potentiality. It is a mysterious paradox in the Supreme reality. In order to realise himself, he divides himself into two, the Being for self, and the Being for expression. The former is he himself, Krishna—the one who attracts, and the latter is his "Swarupa-Shakti". Radha—one who adores. Literally Radha means adoration or Love devotion. Radha is the embodied manifestation of Krishna's love principle, the energy of His soul, the principle in Krishna who sets his Love into motion.

Man has temptation for worldly things. There are some who have temptation for Godly status but no one has ever heard of God having temptation. That three temptations arose in the core of heart of the Supreme-Being, Krishna, is an event unheard of, or unimaginable.

Krishna has temptation to know the excellence of Radha. He has longing for knowing himself as he is known by Radha. He hankers to enjoy the blissful delight that Radha enjoys in loving him.

Krishna broods over the fact of mysterious strangeness of the love of Radha. "Her love intoxicates Me", said the Lord

Himself. This is a fact and not a metaphor. Radha's love maddens Krishna. To have a glimpse of Radha even for a second, Krishna spends sleepless nights beneath a tree in the courtyard of Radha's house. Just to touch the pure body of Radha, Krishna disguises himself in the garb of a beggar, a cosmetic-seller, a flower-seller and what not. He even embraces a golden coloured creeper thinking it to be Radha. All these activities of Krishna are like those of an insane person. Unless there is any unthinkable mystery in Radha's love these could not happen in his life.

Shri Krishna longs to unfathom the mystery of Radha's love. This longing of Krishna can never be satisfied as long as the two personalities continue to be two and unless the two individuals coalesce into one. If Krishna becomes Radha, or Radha becomes Krishna, the mystery of Radha's love might be unfathomed. This is what happened exactly in the personality of Mahaprabhu.

This is the first "Lobha" (Temptation) of Krishna. This sometimes is called also the "Prathama Bancha" (First desire). Let us now consider the 'Dwitiya Bancha' (Second desire). Krishna's sweetness is infinite. It finds expression through three channels—sweetness of his Body (Rupa Madhurya), the charm of his sporting activities (Lila Madhurya) and the enchanting sweetness of his eternal flute (Benu Madhurya). By these three channels of sweetness Krishna attracts all animate and inanimate objects of this universe.

But he himself cannot enjoy or appreciate the sweetness of his own person, his sports or his flute. He comes to know about these and relishes these through Radha, just as one cannot see one's own face, unless there is a mirror. So Krishna enjoys his own sweetness in and through Radha. It is the eyes of Radha that see the beauty of his body. It is the ears of Radha that listen to the melody of his flute. It is the heart of Radha that enjoys and feels the sportive 'lila' of

Krishna. Now Krishna is seized with the profoundest desire to know his own sweetness as seen and appreciated by Radha. This could be possible only when Krishna realises his identity with Radha, that is to say, if Radha and Krishna can be merged and united into one personality. Exactly that is what happened in the splendid personality of Mahaprabhu.

Two such "Banchas" (Desires) of Krishna have already been explained. Now about the third 'Bancha' i.e., third desire of Krishna—Krishna enjoys delightful feeling in loving Radha and Radha similarly enjoys a delightful experience in loving Krishna. But the delights of Radha and that enjoyed by Krishna are not of equal magnitude. Radha's delight is thousand times greater than that of Krishna. To illustrate the point—when Krishna smells the fragrance of Radha's body, he loses his senses and becomes almost insane ; but when the sweet fragrance of Krishna's body enters the nostrils of Radha, she runs to and fro, and then rushes with speed of a gusty wind towards the source of that fragrance. Krishna in love becomes enchanted, whereas Radha becomes blind in love and races towards Krishna wherever he might be. This thus proves the fact that Radha's delight in the enjoyment of Krishna surpasses that of Krishna thousandfold. Krishna has a hankering to enjoy the delight as much as Radha does. This is not possible unless Krishna enters into the very core of Radha's heart and became one with her in all respects. Such an identity took place in the unparalleled personality of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

For the fulfilment of all the three "Banchas" (Desires) Krishna embraced Radha in his bosom and attained a unique oneness. We say unique not without a reason. In the oneness of absolute Brahma "Rasa" is latent, since 'rasa' presupposes enjoyment by two individuals. In the love of Radha-Krishna 'rasa' reaches its complete actualisation. In the personality of

Mahaprabhu he is in the state of highest unity. The enjoyment of both, of the two is eternally present.

We are now in a position to answer the question we raised —“Whence did he bring it and how could he be the best propagator of this supreme wealth?” Mahaprabhu did it, because he himself was Love incarnate. He was an embodiment of Radha-Krishna in the deepest embrace. He had the true knowledge and genuine realisation of all the sweetness of the “Braja-Lila” in his loving personality. Preaching is possible only when one has the actual realisation within. Mahaprabhu gave expression to what he enjoyed, and he enunciated what he constantly enjoyed. His enjoying and propagating it were the two aspects of one and the same realisation. In this respect Mahaprabhu is unsurpassable by giving and receiving love in one and at the same moment. He gave each and every one what he enjoyed himself at every moment. Such “Peace, Blessedness and Joy” were unprecedented before Mahaprabhu’s advent.



PREM—THE FIFTH END
(*PANCHAMA PURUSHARTHA*)

The Sanskrit word “purushartha” means the aim and objective of human activity. The goal or ideal that motivates any endeavour is “Purushartha”. On the basis of observed facts the Hindu Sociologists maintain that there are four such ends : Kama, Artha, Dharma and Moksha That is Sense Pleasure ; Mental and Intellectual Pleasure ; Social Justice ; and Liberation. These four objectives are the well-known “Chaturbarga”.

“Kam” means sense-pleasure and lust. These pleasures are never satiated. Artha means wealth, honour, authority, fame and all the so-called good things of life. Dharma or justice consists in having a compromise amongst the different tendencies as much as possible. According to “Bhagabat Gita” “Swa-Dharma” means performing well one’s own duties, duties to which one is naturally entitled. Liberation ignores these three ends since they are transient. The seekers of ‘Moksha’ (Liberation) uphold the view that the world is full of misery and the only joy lies in liberation.

Mahaprabhu does not accept liberation as the final end. We marvel at the boldness of Mahaprabhu, when he throws aside even the ‘Moksha’ which for ages has been regarded as the final goal by the founders of the six systems of Hindu philosophy *i. e.*, Nyaya, Vaishesika, Sankhya, Patanjala, Mimangsa and Vedanta. They all proclaim “moksha” (Liberation) as the highest end, even though they may differ in their explanations about the concept and realisation of this “Moksha”.

Mahaprabhu however rejects the age-old tradition of “Chaturbarga” as the final goal of our activities. According to Mahaprabhu, the real objective of life is one and only one, and that is the fifth one which transcends all the aforesaid four ends (Chaturbarga). This fifth-end is nothing but PREM. This is his most astonishing contribution to the human history of philosophies and we shall try to establish this contention of Mahaprabhu.

We attempt to establish this fifth-end (Pancham-Purushartha) in contrast with the concept of liberation as held by Sankaracharya. Liberation can be considered from two view-points. One is negative, the other one positive. Sankaracharya maintains the negative side of liberation, whereas Mahaprabhu upholds the extreme positive side of it. Let us elaborate.

The precise character of liberation has to be derived from the ultimate nature of man and God, and their Inter-relationship. According to Sankara, there is no difference between man and God in the final analysis. They are perfectly identical. The egoistical personality of man is illusory. When the illusory personality is transcended, man becomes what he really is—one with Universal consciousness, which is impersonal and absolute. The experience of that oneness is liberation which is the final end. To Sankaracharya, liberation or freedom has only one side—the negative side, freedom from bondage, freedom from darkness, freedom from ignorance or, in one word, freedom from “Maya”.

To Mahaprabhu the positive side of freedom is of more importance than the negative one. To him freedom means freedom in movement, freedom in fullest life, freedom in eternal joy. In one word freedom in Love, and according to him this is the “Panchama-Purushartha”—the fifth-end.

The ultimate nature of man as Mahaprabhu views it, is not impersonal. Mahaprabhu upholds that there is a vain personality which has to be transcended, but that transcendence alone according to him does not constitute the final stage of liberation. Man has to reach to the Lord's true personality. viz., His “Swarupa”—the genuine existence which sits high on the throne beside the Purusottama, the God-head Shri Krishna. Mahaprabhu accepts the view of the ‘Bhagabata Puran’ that the Absolute-Being Brahma has three aspects, “param-atman”—the world soul, Brahma the absolute par excellence impersonal, immovable, immutable transcendental world soul. The third is Bhagavad Purusottama, the Supreme-God-head Krishna. Krishna is a Dynamic Personality. He moves. He dances. He loves. He plays on his eternal flute. He grows. He flows forth due to exuberance of joy and fulness of perfection. He expands—yet he is always new—“Nitya Nutan”. A liberated

man attains nearness of him (Sajujya) and becomes an eternal partner in his sporting activities, which is called the "Lila".

We have said already that the fifth-end is the positive side of the fourth-end, nevertheless, the more one lives deeply in the fifth-end, *i. e.*, "Prem", the more he becomes averse to the fourth-end *i.e.*, 'Moksha' or liberation. By and by, the seeker does not find the need of the fourth-end any longer. Liberation or 'moksha' is of course necessary, but one does not find any necessity of troubling oneself about it any more. As soon as the Sun rises all darkness is dispelled in a moment and no special efforts are at all needed to make the Sun dispel the darkness. In the same fashion as soon as the Sun of Divine Love rises in one's heart, all the bondages of darkness, doubts and ignorances drop off instantaneously without any extraeffort by him whatsoever. The best way to achieve Liberation therefore is to forget all about it. One feels averse to talk about one's liberation or even utter the word 'Mukti' or 'Moksha' when he attains PREM.

Mahaprabhu advises us to dedicate therefore our whole heart, our whole life to loving Lord Krishna and forget all about 'Moksha' or 'Mukti' (Salvation). He says, "LOVE THE SUPREME LORD SHRI KRISHNA WITH ALL THY SOUL, WITH ALL THY SPIRIT, WITH ALL THY MITE."

SIKSHASTAKA—THE EIGHT TEACHINGS OF SRI CHAITANYA

(1) Glories to the congregational chanting of the Holy Names of Sri Krishna which sweeps the dirt accumulated on the mirror of the heart and extinguishes the great forest-fire of worldly suffering. It sheds moonlight upon the lily of eternal good, it is the very life of the bride of knowledge at every step it is full of the taste of nectar, it swells the ocean of divine bliss and thus engulfs the entire self.

(2) Oh ! My Lord—You have unlimited names and in those names you have invested your unlimited potencies. Further-more you have made no restrictions of time and place in chanting these names. Yet even though you are so kind in giving of your name, yet it is my great misfortune that I have no attraction for uttering it.

(3) When one is more humble than the grass below one's feet, more tolerant than the trees, is free from all desire for personal eulogy but ready to respect all others only then one is able to chant the HARINAM incessantly.

(4) Oh ! Lord of the Universe ! I have no desire for wealth, having followers or for beautiful poetry. All that I desire is that birth after birth I should have causeless devotion for you.

(5) Oh ! Son of King Nanda ! I am your eternal servant, but somehow I have fallen into an ocean of great suffering. Please be merciful and consider me as one of the specks of dust at your lotus feet.

(6) When will my eyes be washed with torrents of tears, my throat choked up and my entire body covered with trembling as I utter your Holy Names ?

(7) Oh Govinda ! A moment seems like an age—my eyes are like rain clouds in their incessant crying. The whole world has become void in your absence.

(8) Oh unfaithful one ! Should you lack me in your loving embrace or grind me beneath your feet ; should you kill me by being absent from me, I do not mind. Whatever you should do, oh fickle one, no one else but only you remain my Lord forever.







Dr. Mahanambrata Brahmachari is a well known name in the Baishnab circles. Not only his knowledge of theology and religion is indubitable, but his compassion for the suffering exploited masses is equally great.

With the break out of the Second World War in 1939, despite requests, he returned to his home land relinquishing his post of the International Secretary, World Religion Of Faiths, the post he held for six years in the U. S. A. and since then he has not rested. He had gone to the remotest of the villages and is still busy propagating 'MAHANAM'.

He has delivered innumerable lectures, held discourses on the Gita, the Bhagabat, not only in our country but also before large congregations of scholars and intellectuals of Europe and the U. S. A. We are now seeing the results of the seed of 'PREM' which Mahanambrataji sowed in the soils of the western world from 1933 to 1939.

Mahanambrataji renounced domestic life at a tender age. He acquired his deep love for humanity from his mother Kamini Sundari Devi and his scholastic habits and knowledge of scriptures from his father Kalidas Dasgupta. He was born as "Bankim" in the Khalisakota village in Barisal of present day Bangladesh on 25 the December, 1904 A. D.

He did his M. A. in Philosophy and Sanskrit topping the list from the University of Calcutta and was awarded Gold Medals. He was also awarded Ph. D. and D. Phil. by the University of Chicago, one of the most prestigious Universities of the United States of America.

For the curiosity of our readers, out of Brahmachariji's innumerable books, we mention here only a few, which are Baishnav-Vedanta, Gita-Dhyan, Chandi-Chinta, Uddhav-Sandesh, Gour-Katha, Upanishad-Bhabana and of course his Phejalabs (ফেলল্যাব) on the tenth canto of the Shrimad Bhagabatam.